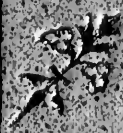
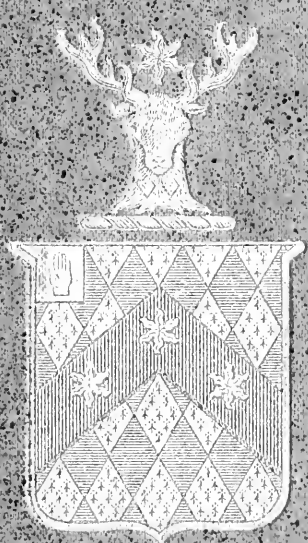
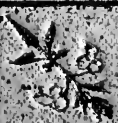


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WRAXALL'S  
HISTORICAL AND POSTHUMOUS  
MEMOIRS.



Ballantyne Press  
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON





*Sir William A. Warrell, Bart.*

THE  
HISTORICAL AND THE POSTHUMOUS



Memoirs

OF

Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall

1772—1784

*EDITED, WITH NOTES AND ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS  
FROM THE AUTHOR'S UNPUBLISHED MS.*

BY

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, F.S.A.

*WITH NUMEROUS PORTRAITS*

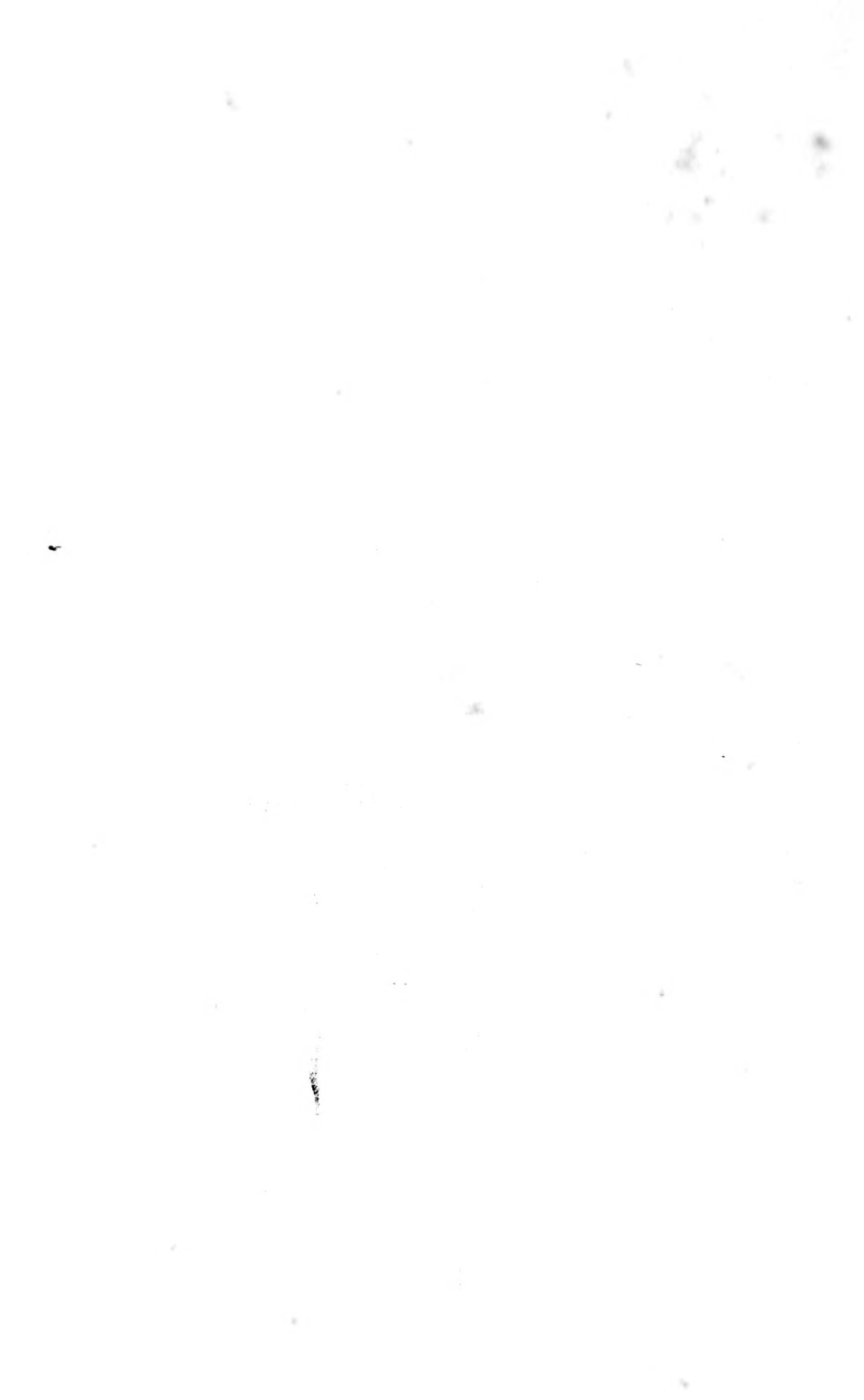
*IN FIVE VOLUMES*

VOL. I.

LONDON

BICKERS & SON, LEICESTER SQUARE

1884



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## P R E F A C E.



**I**N spite of a large amount of sledge-hammer criticism at the time of their publication, Wraxall's "Memoirs" take a high position among the historical literature of our country; and that this position is deserved, few who have studied the reign of George III. will be prepared to dispute. In the history of the time the aid of these "Memoirs" is continually called in, for the excellent reason that Wraxall gives full information on important incidents that have been passed lightly over by others, and particulars relating to individuals who once made an important figure in the world, but are now well-nigh forgotten. Still, the criticisms, which were so abundant, although they really proved the general correctness of the "Memoirs," did discover some mistakes. It therefore becomes important that those who use this

book should be put in possession of such corrections and elucidations as the more recent publications of the papers of those who were actors on the scene prove to be necessary.

Practically this book has not, up to the present time, been edited at all. The "Posthumous Memoirs" were published in 1836 without any notes, and although the "Historical Memoirs" were reprinted at the same time, uniform with them, no notes were added. Even had the author been more rigidly careful in his remarks than Wraxall was, memoirs written nearly seventy years ago would surely require some elucidation to make them practically useful to the present generation of readers.

I may perhaps be permitted here to explain the plan upon which this edition has been prepared, and its claims upon the attention of its readers. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall left at his death an interleaved copy of his "Historical Memoirs," which he had most carefully corrected throughout, and from this copy the present edition has been printed. The author does not appear to have found it necessary to alter the facts, but he pretty extensively altered and improved his style. So much for the text. With regard to the notes, the first to be mentioned are those of Mrs. Piozzi, which are of great interest, as containing the remarks of one who had lived through the scenes described, and knew most of the actors well. Some of these notes were printed at the end of the fourth volume of the edition published in 1836, but no attempt



was made to refer to them in the places to which they properly belonged. Moreover, the numbering of the paging is not the same as that of the edition in which they are printed. Besides these, the further notes printed by Mr. Hayward in the "Autobiography, Letters, and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi" have been added, and the whole are placed in their proper position, and marked by the addition of the letter P.

Some years ago it was the intention of the late Dr. Doran to publish an edition of the "Historical and Posthumous Memoirs," and he added many notes, distinguished by his wide knowledge of the characters of the men of the time. These notes are marked by the addition of the letter D. Dr. Doran's pen had struck through a large portion of the work, so that his edition, if published, would have been an abridgment, and not the complete book. In the present edition, not only are the entire "Memoirs" printed, but also those passages are included which Wraxall thought it expedient to take out after he had suffered for the libel against Count Woronzow. For all the notes signed "ED." I alone am responsible, and I trust that they will be found sufficient for the purpose. There are no immutable canons of editing, and reviewers and editors are sometimes apt to disagree as to the treatment which it is thought best for a book to undergo. Such differences of opinion are specially apt to exist in the case of such a work as Wraxall's "Memoirs." It would have been easy to use largely the contemporary "Memoirs," and to have

added in the notes further anecdotes of the various characters mentioned. But I have not so read my duties. It seems to me that an editor should never lose sight of his primary duty, which is to illustrate his author, and not to add particulars that rather confuse the reader than add to his enlightenment. Where the critics appear to have proved the author incorrect, I have incorporated the correction in a note, and where the correction appears to be plausible, although Wraxall, in his answer to the critics, proves that it is nevertheless untrue, I have drawn attention in a note to both charge and answer. Much of the criticism owed its origin to personal feeling and wounded vanity, and is unworthy of any special notice in the present day.

I have had the advantage of using a copy of the "Memoirs" largely annotated at the time of publication, which formerly belonged to Mr. Henry G. Bohn, the eminent publisher. In spite of these aids, there was much to be sought for in out-of-the-way quarters. It will be seen that the earlier volumes are more fully annotated than the later ones, and this is accounted for by the fact that the whole period over which the "Memoirs" extend is but short, and that, therefore, the same characters are repeatedly mentioned. It is hoped that the full index, which is appended to the fifth volume, will cause the references to particulars of each person to be easily found by the reader, and make the repetition of information relating to him needless.

In the fifth volume will be found some hitherto unpublished chapters, which contain very important

particulars relative to various members of the royal family. These are printed from the original MS. It would appear that they are portions of the "Posthumous Memoirs"<sup>1</sup> which the editor of that work thought it inexpedient to print in 1836. They will now be read with great interest, as full of material for the history of the times. Having explained the lines upon which this edition has been projected, I propose to draw attention to some of the points for which the book itself appears to be remarkable.

These "Memoirs" have a double value. They contain excellent sketches of the men who make history, and of those who, while they occupy a large space in the public eye when alive, are forgotten immediately after their death. Here we have side-lights which help us to understand better the facts of history. Sir Egerton Brydges said that Wraxall's "characters are generally correct, though perhaps rarely profound," and added, that they are "too often already familiar to us;" but what was familiar to the men of the early part of the century is not so familiar to those of the present day.

The "Memoirs" contain, however, as well, history itself, and here are to be found the fullest and most accurate account of three very important incidents in the reign of George III., viz. :—

1. The fight of the Opposition to turn out Lord North on the question of his conduct during the American war.

<sup>1</sup> The title, "Posthumous Memoirs of My Own Time," given to this book, is somewhat awkward, but it is that which was used before, and it has therefore been continued as a convenient form, matching with the title of the "Historical Memoirs."

2. Pitt's fight against the leaders of the Coalition while preparing for a dissolution.
3. Pitt's fight respecting the Regency on the occasion of the King's first insanity.

Wraxall describes as an eyewitness these parliamentary contests, and every one who proposes to write an account of the proceedings of those times must come to Wraxall for information. What is more, the sketches of the different speakers are so vivid, that we feel ourselves present in spirit in old St. Stephen's Chapel, and living in the times when these questions were of vital importance. Other fights are forgotten, but the remembrance of these will always be cherished in the recollection of Englishmen.

Pitt, Fox, Burke, and Sheridan live in these pages, for their greatnesses and their littlenesses are fully depicted. Unfortunately sometimes it is difficult to form a just estimate of these men after reading about them, because Wraxall weighs their qualities too minutely. First he deals out a little blame, then a little praise, and then a little blame again, until the reader becomes confused. Lord Sackville is the only personage whose character Wraxall draws in terms entirely laudatory. The character of Sheridan is one which appears to have dazzled his contemporaries in a manner quite out of proportion with his permanent position both as a statesman and as an orator. Sir Egerton Brydges, while alluding to Wraxall's "panegyrics on the predominant genius of Sheridan," as being beyond all reason, remarks that "it must be a strange mind

which can put the genius or knowledge of Sheridan on a par with that of Burke." Burke's greatness does not appear to have been realised in any adequate manner by Wraxall. Pitt and Fox naturally stand out before us as of colossal stature, and there is nothing to find fault with in respect to the author's recognition of their greatness, although he occasionally makes some petty insinuations which disgust the reader; not that he is likely to imagine either of these men to be faultless, but because the faults here attributed to them are not such as the noble natures of the men would naturally have fallen into.

It is, however, in the pictures of the second-rate men that Wraxall more particularly shines. Without his vivid descriptions the Powyses and the Courtenays would have been forgotten, but in his pages they live again for us. Still some men one would expect to meet are overlooked, and Sir Egerton Brydges remarked that it is surprising Wraxall says nothing of Lord Middlesex, nor of Lord Malmesbury, nor of Lord Fitzwilliam, nor of Tierney. He makes Lord Surrey of too much importance.

Wraxall's style is entirely his own; it is diffuse and full of repetition, and yet it is effective. Somehow it effects its author's object, and while the reader feels that it is frequently awkward, he finds himself led on without a desire to put the book down.

Having thus spoken somewhat of the present edition of the "Memoirs," and of their author's characteristics, I will now pass on to note a few particulars of his life and works.

Nathaniel William Wraxall,<sup>1</sup> the son of William Wraxall, a Bristol merchant, by Anne, great-niece to Sir James Thornhill, the painter, was born in Queen Square, Bristol, on April 8, 1751. According to a Life in Upcott's "Biographical Dictionary of Living Authors" (1816), which was presumably supplied by Wraxall himself, he was descended from the ancient family of that name settled in Wraxall in the county of Somerset. Sir John de Wraxall was a knight of the shire, and represented Somerset and Dorset in Parliament under Edward I., but by the marriage of Alicia de Wraxall to Ralph de Gorges in the reign of Edward III., the village and manor of Wraxall passed into the latter family, who were summoned to Parliament as lords thereof. Such is the statement of this short biography, but I do not find that any one of the name of Wraxall is registered in the Parliamentary Blue Book of Members of Parliament as serving in any of the Parliaments of Edward I. for either Dorset or Somerset. According to his grandson, Sir C. F. Lascelles Wraxall, Sir Nathaniel discovered in his youth, when turning over the muniments of his native city, that one of his ancestors had been bailiff of Bristol in the thirteenth century.

In 1769 Wraxall obtained employment in the civil service of the East India Company, and proceeded to Bombay. He accompanied the

<sup>1</sup> Wraxall is usually known to us as Sir Nathaniel, but he himself gave the preference to his second name, which he wrote in full, while his first name was only indicated by the initial N. Moreover, during the lifetime of his father, he was known as N. William Wraxall, jun.

forces of that Presidency as Judge-Advocate and Paymaster on the two expeditions to Guzerat and against Baroche in 1771. In the following year he left the service of the East India Company, and at the early age of twenty-one his official career closed. The reasons for this are not known, and his grandson, writing in 1864, says "he threw up his post for motives which may be made known hereafter, but do not belong here." It has generally been supposed that he returned with some sort of fortune, but Sir Lascelles Wraxall speaks of him at this time as unknown and friendless. In order to obtain a living he proposed becoming an author, and he undertook an extensive tour so as to obtain materials for a book. He first visited Portugal, and in 1774, while on his travels, he came in contact with certain of the Danish nobility who were anxious for the return of the exiled Queen Caroline Matilda, sister of George III. In September 1774 Wraxall arrived at Zell (Celle), and had an interview with the Queen. The particulars of this negotiation are so fully described in the "Posthumous Memoirs" that it is not needful to refer further to them here. Suffice it to say, that just as the plot was ripe, on May 11, 1775, the Queen suddenly died, not without suspicions of poison. Those, however, best able to judge considered these suspicions as groundless, and held that in her excited state the Queen was specially susceptible to the fever with which she was attacked. This was the one romantic incident of Wraxall's life, and in writing to his father he says, "Probably if I live to a hundred years I

shall never meet with another so wondrous, so extraordinary an adventure, which is so incredible in its own nature that I know not what to say to it." When the reviewers attacked Wraxall for not being in the secret of any party, he pointed out that his views differed from those of the reviewers, and that such secrets as he knew he was indisposed to publish to the world, adding, with regard to his intercourse with the Queen, "But though above forty years have elapsed since the decease of that amiable and unfortunate Princess, I have never alluded in any of my publications to the negotiation in which I was consulted and employed by her Majesty. Yet, if disclosed, it would excite great interest, for it resembled in many particulars a story of romance, and, according to the principle laid down by the reviewers, it would 'form legitimate materials for history.' But these worthy gentlemen and I see objects through opposite ends of the telescope."<sup>1</sup> Sir Lascelles Wraxall, when describing the sources from which he compiled his own "Life and Times of Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark and Norway" (1864), writes, "Lastly, the private journals of Sir N. W. Wraxall have been laid under contribution to a great extent. It was made known by the publication of the 'Posthumous Memoirs' that he had been connected with the Queen of Denmark, but it was only during the last year that I discovered how much my grandfather knew of the affair, and how well he kept silence on the subject."

<sup>1</sup> "An Answer to the Calumnious Misrepresentations of the 'Quarterly Review,' the 'British Critic,' and the 'Edinburgh Review,'" 1818, p. 9.



Wraxall does not appear to have been at all handsomely treated by the King in this matter, for he evidently spent time and money ungrudgingly in the cause of the King's sister, and probably he would have received nothing in return had he not, five years later, become a member of Parliament, and then the thousand guineas he received looked very much like a bribe. Sir Lascelles Wraxall writes, "It may be added that the Danish nobility wrote a letter to George III., in which they formally renounced and refused all repayment of the sums disbursed in the cause of the Queen's restoration, which repayment was expressly stipulated by his Britannic Majesty in the third article of the conditions which Mr. Wraxall carried over to Germany in February 1775. They only asked that their agent might be honourably rewarded and employed. But it was all of no avail."<sup>1</sup>

In 1775 Wraxall published his "Cursory Remarks made in a Tour through some of the Northern Parts of Europe, particularly Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Petersburg," a third edition of which was published in 1776; and a fourth edition in 1807, under the title of "A Tour Round the Baltic."

He appears to have been living in London for a time in 1776, and in the "Posthumous Memoirs" he mentions meeting Dr. Dodd at dinner at the house of Dilly, the bookseller. The company was a dis-

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Times of Caroline Matilda," vol. iii. p. 306. Sir Lascelles Wraxall prints in the Appendix a series of letters from Sir Nathaniel to his father during the period he was engaged in these negotiations. One letter is dated from the Adelphi, January 21, 1775, another from the Cocoa Tree, Pall Mall, and another from Jermyn Street.

tinguished one, Wilkes, Sir William Jones, and De Lolme being present. Dodd invited the company to dine with him at his house in Argyll Street, which invitation was accepted. In the following year Dodd was hanged at Newgate. While lying in prison, the wretched man, among many other applications, urgently requested Wraxall to use his exertions with Lord Nugent to procure a pardon.

In the summer of 1777 Wraxall made some stay at the Hague, where he was presented to the Prince of Orange. Before leaving England he had received from George III. a lieutenant's commission, which was granted on the application of Lord Robert Manners, who then commanded the third regiment of Dragoon Guards. In the uniform of this regiment Wraxall two years later visited the theatre at Florence, and there saw Prince Charles Edward. "As soon as the Chevalier approached near enough to distinguish the English regimental, he instantly stopped, gently shook off the two servants who supported him one on each side, and, taking off his hat, politely saluted us. He then passed on to his carriage, sustained by the two attendants as he descended the staircase."

In 1777 appeared, in two volumes octavo, "*Memoirs of the Kings of France of the Race of Valois, interspersed with Interesting Anecdotes, to which is added a Tour through the Western, Southern, and Interior Provinces of France, in a Series of Letters.*" A second edition of this work appeared in 1785, with the more ambitious title of "*The History of France under the Kings of the Race of Valois,*

from the accession of Charles V. in 1364 to the death of Charles IX. in 1574." A third edition came out in 1807. Of this book Professor Smyth speaks very highly in his "Lectures on Modern History;" he says it is "but too amusing, and as a companion to the greater histories perfectly invaluable." The "Tour" appended to the first edition was published separately in 1784.

Wraxall made a second visit to Dresden in the autumn of 1778, and in the following year he resided for a time at Naples, where he enjoyed the friendship of Sir William Hamilton. With 1780 his political life may be said to commence, for it was in that year that, through the influence of Lord Sackville (then Lord George Germaine), he was elected a member of Parliament for the borough of Hindon, in Wiltshire, being the colleague of Lloyd Kenyon (afterwards Lord Kenyon). Lord Sackville appears to have been a good friend to Wraxall, and in July 1781 he would have appointed him Under-Secretary of State, but the other Under-Secretary (Mr. Knox) opposed the appointment, as he said that if his colleague occupied a seat in Parliament the whole drudgery of the office would fall upon him. Suddenly, however, the King and Lord North saw the advisability of remunerating his services to the Queen Caroline Matilda, and a present of a thousand guineas was given to him, with a promise of a seat at the Board of Green Cloth.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1781, when

<sup>1</sup> In a letter (his third) which Wraxall wrote to the King, dated "77 New Bond Street, 1st April 1780," he says:—"I only humbly request from your Majesty's bounty the sum, amounting nearly to five

the secret committee was appointed to inquire into the causes of the war in the Carnatic, Wraxall was named one of the scrutineers to examine the names of the persons chosen to compose it, an office of some importance in the then heated state of party feeling, as is shown by the fact that Lord North himself, then Prime Minister, was one of the scrutineers. On the whole, Wraxall's parliamentary career was not particularly brilliant, and although he spoke occasionally, nobody appears to have listened to him. Walpole, writing to Mason on February 1781, describes a blue-stocking meeting at Lady Lucan's:—"Mr. Wraxall was not there. I wonder why; and so will he, for he is popping into every spot where he can make himself talked of by talking of himself; but I hear he will come to an untimely beginning in the House of Commons."

Wraxall takes credit to himself for having sent the first intelligence of the peace of 1783 overland to India; and he says that a member of the Court

hundred pounds, which I actually laid out from my private purse for her Danish Majesty. This is the ultimate limit of my hopes and entreaties." This apparently was unattended to, but on February 9th, 1781, the King wrote to Lord North respecting another letter (apparently Wraxall's fourth): "Lord North's supposition that the letter he transmitted this morning came from Mr. Wraxall, the member for Hindon, proves very just by former letters I have received from him; I return it to Lord North, who may see the gentleman, and settle with him any just demands he can have. Undoubtedly he was sent over by the discontented nobility of Denmark previous to the death of the late queen, my sister, with a plan of getting her back to Copenhagen, which was introduced to me with a letter from her. Her death, and my delicate situation, having consented to her retiring into my German dominions, prevented me from entering eagerly into this proposal." (See "*Correspondence of George III. with Lord North*," edited by W. Bodham Donne, 1867, vol. ii. p. 359.)

of Directors of the East India Company desired to procure for him some honorary mark of the Company's gratitude; but on mentioning the subject to the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman, they observed that to thank Wraxall for sending out intelligence would seem to imply a tacit condemnation of their own neglect. It does seem a most astonishing instance of neglect on the part of Lord Sydney, the Secretary of State, of the East India Company, and of the French Minister, that full six weeks elapsed after the receipt at Madras of the extraordinary gazette sent out by Wraxall before any official information, either from the Court of Versailles, from the British Government, or from the East India House, arrived on the coast of Coromandel. It is such facts as these that bring so vividly before our eyes the change that a hundred years has brought about in the management of the affairs of the world.

In this same year, 1783, Wraxall ceased to be a follower of Lord North, and when the division was taken on Fox's "India Bill," he joined the minority that followed Pitt. At the general election in 1784 he was returned to Parliament for Ludgershall, George Selwyn's pocket burgh. He mentions Selwyn several times in his "Memoirs," and refers to the intimate relations between them; but Selwyn does not appear to have appreciated his association with Wraxall, and he is said to have persistently mispronounced his name, going about asking "Who is this Rascall?"

As a follower of Pitt, Wraxall came under the lash of the clever coterie who produced the

"Rolliad," and the prominent position which he occupies in that curious gallery of portraits shows that he did not make quite so contemptible a figure in Parliament as his enemies wished to make the public believe. He himself appears to have been far from angry at the liberty taken with him, for he was a great admirer of the "Rolliad," and is never tired of quoting it in his "Memoirs." In the recommendatory testimonies prefixed to the "Probationary Odes for the Laureateship" (1785), is one supposed to be from Lord Monboddo, and to be a postscript to that learned writer's "Ancient Metaphysics," which is as follows, and refers to Lord Monboddo's belief in the existence of a race of men with tails :—

"Testimony of Nathaniel William Wraxall, Esq., his great merits.

"*Lord Monboddo*.—Since I put forth my last volume, I have read the excellent ode of Mr. Wraxall, and was pleased to find that bold apostrophe in his delicious lyric,

'Hail ouran-outangs ! hail anthropophagi !'

"My principles are now pretty universally known ; but on this occasion I will repeat them succinctly. I believe from the bottom of my soul that all mankind are absolute ouran-outangs—that the feudal tenures are the great cause of not retaining the perfect appearance of ourans—that human beings originally moved on all fours—that we had better move in the same way again—that there have been giants ninety feet high—that such giants ought to have moved on all fours—that we all continue to

be ouran-outangs still, some more so, some less, but that Nathaniel William Wraxall, Esq., is the purest ouran-outang in Great Britain, and therefore ought immediately to take to all fours, and especially to make all his motions in Parliament in that way."

The ode alluded to in this recommendation is No. IX. of the "Probationary Odes," and is as follows :—

## I.

Murrain seize the House of Commons,  
 Hoarse catarrh their windpipes shake,  
 Who, deaf to travell'd Learning's summons,  
 Rudely coughed whene'er I spake !  
 North, nor Fox's thund'ring course,  
 Nor e'en the Speaker, tyrant, shall have force  
 To save thy walls from mighty breaches,  
 From Wraxall's votes, from Wraxall's speeches.  
 Geography, terraqueous maid,  
 Descend from globes to statesmen's aid !  
 Again to heedless crowds unfold  
 Truths unheard, tho' not untold :  
 Come, and once more unlock this vasty world—  
 Nations attend ! the map of earth's unfurl'd.

## II.

Begin the song from where the Rhine,  
 The Elbe, the Danube, Weser rolls—  
 Joseph, nine circles, forty sees are thine—  
 Thine, twenty million souls—  
 Upon a marish flat and dank  
 States, six and one,  
 Dam the dykes, the sees embank,  
 Maugre the Don !  
 A gridiron's form the proud Escorial rears,  
 While south of Vincent's Cape anchovies glide :  
 But ah ! o'er Tagus, once auriferous tide,  
 A priest-rid Queen Braganza's sceptre bears—  
 Hard fate ! that Lisbon's Diet-drink is known  
 To cure each crazy constitution but her own.

## III.

I burn, I burn, I glow, I glow,  
 With antique and with modern lore ;  
 I rush from Bosphorus to Po,  
 To Nilus from the Nore.  
 Why were thy Pyramids, O Egypt ! rais'd,  
 But to be measur'd and be prais'd !  
 Avaunt, ye crocodiles ! your threats are vain !  
 On Norway's seas, my soul, unshaken,  
 Brav'd the sea-snake and the craken ;  
 And shall I heed the river's scaly train ?  
 Afric, I scorn thy alligator band !  
 Quadrant in hand,  
 I take my stand,  
 And eye thy moss-clad needle, Cleopatra grand !  
 O that great Pompey's pillar were my own !  
 Eighty-eight feet the shaft, and all one stone !  
 But hail, ye lost Athenians !  
 Hail also, ye Armenians !  
 Hail once, ye Greeks, ye Romans, Carthaginians !  
 Twice hail, ye Turks, and thrice, ye Abyssinians !  
 Hail too, O Lapland, with thy squirrels airy !  
 Hail, commerce-catching Tipperary !  
 Hail, wonder-working magi !  
 Hail, ourang-outangs ! Hail, anthropophagi !  
 Hail, all ye cabinets of every state,  
 From poor Marino's Hill to Catherine's empire great !  
 All, all have chiefs who speak, who write, who seem to think,  
 Caermarthens, Sydneys, Rutlands, paper, pens, and ink.

## IV.

Thus, through all climes, to earth's remotest goal,  
 From burning Indus to the freezing Pole,  
 In chaises and on floats,  
 In dillies and in boats :  
 Now on a camel's native stool,  
 Now on an ass, now on a mule,  
 Nabobs and Rajahs have I seen :  
 Old Bramins mild, young Arabs keen ;



Tall Polygars,  
Dwarf Zemindars,  
Mahommed's tomb, Killarney's lake, the fane of Ammon,  
With all thy kings and queens, ingenious Mrs. Salmon.<sup>1</sup>  
Yet vain the majesties of wax,  
Vain the cut velvet on their backs—  
George, mighty George is flesh and blood—  
No head he wants of wax or wood ;  
His heart is good !  
(As a king's shou'd)  
And everything he says is understood.

<sup>1</sup> Exhibits the waxwork in Fleet Street.

Wraxall published anonymously in January 1787 a pamphlet entitled "A Short Review of the Political State of Great Britain," which attracted much attention at the time, and had a large sale. It is written in a lively style, and is worth reading now, although it does not contain any information of importance. The author is by no means flattering to the Prince of Wales, of whom he writes, "It is not yet too late to regain the esteem and recover the affections of a generous people, ever prone to pity and to pardon the errors which do not proceed from depravity of heart or defect of principle. Time will insensibly draw a veil across his past irregularities, and consign them to perpetual oblivion. Let him express towards his father and his sovereign a decent and a filial reverence, however he may retain his private opinion on matters of policy!" Pitt, Fox, North, Burke, and Sheridan are painted not altogether in favourable colours, and the ill-treatment which Rodney and Warren Hastings received from their country is warmly censured. Wraxall

says that the secret of the authorship of this pamphlet was strictly kept; but one of his reviewers expresses his opinion that the secret was an open one. There is a full account of the effect of this pamphlet in the "Posthumous Memoirs" (iv. 372). Within a few days after publication, six editions, each consisting of 1000 or 1500 copies, were sold, and on the 23d of February a French translation from the sixth edition was published, under the title of "*Coup-d'Œil sur l'Etat Politique de la Grande Bretagne au Commencement de l'Année 1787.*" The total sale of the English pamphlet was estimated by Debrett, the publisher, at 17,000 copies. Replies were issued, one of which was attributed to Lord Erskine, and another to Sir Philip Francis. Warren Hastings himself was mentioned as the author, and Major Scott took the trouble to deny in the House of Commons this assumption. Wraxall says that the Prince of Wales sent repeatedly to Debrett peremptorily demanding to know from him the name of the author, and menacing him with a prosecution for libel. If this was the case, it seems probable that the secret of the authorship was well kept, for a few years after Wraxall was on friendly terms with the Prince of Wales, and it is scarcely probable that the Prince suspected the authorship of the pamphlet. In 1789 Wraxall married a Miss Lascelles, who is described as follows in the "Biographical Dictionary of Living Authors," evidently from information supplied by the husband himself:—"Jane, eldest daughter of Peter Lascelles, Esq., of Knights, in Hertfordshire, descended from

the ancient family of Lascelles of Mount Grace, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, a branch of which family has been since raised to the peerage, first in the person of Edwin Lascelles, created Baron of Harewood, and since of Henry, successively created Baron and Earl of that name." Wraxall was elected in 1790 member of Parliament for Wallingford, and he sat as colleague of Sir Francis Sykes. Four years afterwards his seat appears to have been required for Mr. Francis William Sykes, for in March 1794 he accepted the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, and his parliamentary career concluded. During the period he sat in the House, he acted as vauqeel or agent for the Nabob of Arcot, and was one of the small party of retired Indian officials which was known as the "Bengal Squad." We find him uniformly voting against the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and on these occasions he often went into the opposite lobby to that into which his leader, Pitt, was drawn. When he no longer had his parliamentary duties to attend to, he devoted himself more exclusively to his literary pursuits, and in 1795 appeared his continuation of the "Memoirs of the Kings of France," under the title of "The History of France, from the Accession of Henry III. to the Death of Lewis XIV." (3 vols. 4to.) A second edition of this work appeared in 1814, in six volumes octavo; but although the title describes the limit of the history as the death of Louis XIV., the period described only extends from 1574 to 1614. The three additional volumes, which were to contain the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV.,

were never published. In 1797 Wraxall translated and published a pamphlet of about a hundred pages, entitled "The Correspondence between a Traveller and a Minister of State in October and November 1792, preceded by Remarks upon the Origin and the Final Object of the Present War, as well as upon the Political Position of Europe in October 1796. Translated from the Original French, and accompanied with a Preface by N. William Wraxall, Esq., London. Printed by J. Debrett, opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly." The pamphlet is dedicated to the Right Hon. William Pitt and the Right Hon. Charles James Fox, who are urged by the editor to unite for the benefit of their country. Three years later, Wraxall entertained the world with his "Memoirs of the Courts of Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw, and Vienna in the Years 1777, 1778, and 1779." A second edition was published in 1800, and a third edition in 1806.

There is now a gap in our author's life of a few years, and for a time he does not appear to have been much engaged in literary or political pursuits. According to the hitherto unpublished chapter of his "Memoirs," which will be found in the fifth volume of this work, he was during this period in frequent communication with the Prince of Wales. When he was a member of Parliament, and in political opposition to the Coalition, he did not visit at Carlton House, although he had opportunities of seeing the Prince of Wales at the assemblies of the French and Spanish ambassadors, as well as at Cumberland House, the residence of the Prince's

uncle. When, however, he gave up parliamentary life in 1794, he was personally invited to visit the Prince both at Carlton House and at Brighton. He tells us that in 1797 and 1798 he was regularly invited to meet his Royal Highness at dinner, as one of a small political rather than convivial party, and that in 1799 the Prince was pleased to designate him under official seal his future Historiographer. Wraxall adds, "The nomination was accompanied by his permission and desire, not verbal but written, that I would henceforward wear that uniform 'which was exclusively reserved for his family and friends!'"

It has always been a matter of surprise that Wraxall should have been created a baronet in 1813. It appears from the addition to the "Memoirs" that it was entirely owing to the wish of the Prince Regent that he obtained that honour. The Prince had inscribed his name on the list for the preceding year, but Lord Liverpool had prevented him from obtaining the honour then.

In 1815 the "Historical Memoirs" were first published, and although the critics and the friends of those mentioned in them were highly indignant, the sale was very considerable. Wraxall affirms, in his first answer to the critics, which is dated August 1815, that the first edition, consisting of 1000 copies, was sold in thirty-three days, between the 14th of April and the 17th of May, though the price was six and twenty shillings. Unfortunately for the author, he brought in the name of Count Woronzow as the authority for a scandalous story. The result

was that he was found guilty of libel, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of £500. The Count's honour being satisfied by the verdict he had obtained, he endeavoured to save Wraxall from the effects of his hastiness. The consequence was that the careless author got off with three months' imprisonment instead of six. A second edition of the "Memoirs," with the obnoxious matter expunged, was brought out in the middle of June, and in August nearly the whole of that had been sold.

Wraxall makes two allusions to this libel in his answers to the critics. In the first answer he writes, "I forbear to make any comment on the manner in which both the Reviews have mentioned the prosecution commenced against me by Count Woronzow for having inadvertently mentioned his name in a way hurtful to his feelings—a circumstance which could not have arisen from any intention to injure or offend, which I regret, and for which, as soon as I was apprized of it, I made every becoming apology." And again, in the second answer he writes as follows :—"I have not the least reluctance or hesitation to repeat, as I now do for the third time in print, that I regret having very inadvertently mentioned Count Woronzow's name in a manner painful or injurious to his feelings. But the Duke of Sorrentino, of whom Lord Blaney expressed himself in the most severe terms, was contented to receive an apology from him only a few weeks ago in the Court of the King's Bench, upon Lord Blaney's expressing his concern and sorrow for the offence."

The publication of the "Historical Memoirs" was stopped for two years, but in 1818 a third edition was published. When the "Posthumous Memoirs" were published in 1836 the "Historical Memoirs" were reprinted, so as to match their successors, but little or no alteration was made in the text.<sup>1</sup> As already noticed, the flutter among the critics was great when the "Memoirs" appeared, and these critics were unmeasured in their abuse of the author. In the first answer the author writes, "The charges made against myself may be reduced to three, namely, my want of ability and utter inaptitude for executing the work that I have undertaken, my immorality, and lastly, my deviations from truth, sometimes destitute even of that apology. Heavier imputations can hardly be affixed on an author. Let us see how they are sustained." He then answers his critics with some effect. In the second answer he gives the six heads of accusation against him :—

"The first is that 'I impute cowardice to Louis XVI.'

"The second, that 'I accuse Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke of being ready to bring Lord North to the block.'

"The third, that 'I accuse Lord North of having coalesced with Mr. Fox from prudential motives.'

"The fourth (if it means anything) arraigns me for attributing to Lord Thurlow the reply which he made to his Majesty in the autumn of the year

<sup>1</sup> It would perhaps be more correct to say that the remainder of the third edition was re-issued with a new title-page and a few of the sheets reprinted. Mrs. Piozzi's notes and an index were added to the fourth volume.

1783 when the King entertained ideas of visiting his Hanoverian dominions.

“The fifth and sixth form a complicated charge, namely, that I first ‘impute to the King duplicity to his Ministers,’ and next, that ‘I excuse or approve his conduct.’”

These charges also he very fairly refutes, and in the first answer he carries the war into the enemy’s camp by thus attacking the “Edinburgh Review:”—“I trust that the conductors of the ‘Edinburgh Review’ will receive from the public the merited reward of their laborious and malevolent attack on a work which, however great or numerous, as I admit, may be its defects, is characterised in every page by qualities vainly to be sought in *their* productions, namely, loyalty to the sovereign, detestation of French principles, abhorrence of Bonaparte and all his fallen Jacobin gang, attachment to the crown, and reverence for the British constitution.”

One very strong testimony in favour of Wraxall was the letter which Sir George Osborn, for forty years equerry to George III., wrote to him. He says, “I have your first edition here, and have perused it again with much attention. I pledge my name that I personally know nine parts out of ten of your anecdotes to be perfectly correct. You are imprisoned for giving to future ages a perfect picture of our time, and as interesting as Clarendon.” Sir Archibald Alison, writing in “Blackwood’s Magazine,” says, “We never doubted that the anecdotes he told were in the main true from the moment we saw the ‘Quarterly’ and ‘Edinburgh



Reviews' combined in running him down. Nothing but truth could have produced so portentous an alliance." In an early volume of "Ebony" we read, "It has been too much the custom to laugh at Wraxall and his early volumes, but he was no common man. All his works, even to his History, show the skill of a dexterous mind, a happy seizure of the important idea, and not unfrequently an eloquence of expression that might have placed him above many a much more assuming contemporary."<sup>1</sup> The "Second Answer to the Calumnious Attacks of the 'Edinburgh'" was written in 1818, and prefixed to the third edition of the "Historical Memoirs." Wraxall had now felt enough of the inconvenience of publishing anecdotes of men who were still living, and he therefore decided that such remaining "Memoirs" as he had prepared should not see the light until after his death. We have no record of his movements during the period that elapsed between the publication of the third edition of the "Historical Memoirs" in 1818 and his death in 1831, which took place at Dover on November 7, at a good old age. In some notices of Wraxall it is said that he was on his way to Naples when he died, but in "John Bull" it was announced at the time of his death that he died "after a lingering illness of eight months, aged 81."

Some one who was aggrieved at the contents of the "Historical Memoirs" made an epigram upon him which has lived—

<sup>1</sup> "Blackwood," vol. xl. (1836), p. 63.

“Men, manners, seasons, scenes, and facts all  
Misquoting, misstating,  
Misplacing, misdating,  
Here lies Sir Nathaniel Wraxall.”

Posterity, however, has been more just in its appreciation of the author, and few will now agree in the truth of these bitter lines.

As to the character of Wraxall himself, there is but little to be said. He does not obtrude himself upon his reader's notice. He was an observer of the history which was being made around him, but not one of those who made it. He himself thought he was “the object of Royal and Ministerial enmity,” and was surprised that he did not receive his deserts. We are surprised that one who did so little should have gained so much. It is necessary to say this ; but our author has given his readers so much pleasure, that it seems almost ungrateful to find any fault with him. His critics prophesied that his book would soon be forgotten, but after sixty-eight years of existence it stands in a more permanent position as an historical authority, and I trust that the present edition will help to make it still more widely read.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY.

*September 1883.*



## LIST OF PORTRAITS IN VOL. I.

SIR N. W. WRAXALL . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
MRS. MONTAGU . . . . .	<i>page 100</i>
THOMAS, SECOND LORD LYTTFELTON . . . . .	<i>„ 226</i>
EARL OF BUTE . . . . .	<i>307</i>







# HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF

# MY OWN TIME.

—o—

## *PART THE FIRST.*

**H**AVING long meditated to compose some account of the national events which I have witnessed during a part of my life,<sup>1</sup> I have postponed the publication of the work till nearly all those persons of whom I must have occasion to speak were removed from the scene.<sup>2</sup> In fact, with the excep-

<sup>1</sup> Wraxall was born in 1751, and therefore sixty-four years of age when he first published these Memoirs in 1815. At the date when the Memoirs commence, 1772, Lord North had been Prime Minister two years. The Administration of which he was the head was the seventh since the accession of George III. (1760). Lord North's Administration began in 1770. It was followed by Lord Rockingham's second Ministry in 1782, which was succeeded by that of the Earl of Shelburne in the same year.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Nathaniel had reason to regret that this was not entirely the fact, for one of the persons—Count Woronzow—alluded to in a subsequent page, prosecuted the author for the remarks made on

tion of a very small number of individuals, respecting whom I have been silent, scarcely any of the leading characters now survive who supported or opposed Lord North, the Marquis of Rockingham, the Earl of Shelburne, or the Coalition Administration. The lapse of more than thirty years has removed every objection of that nature; and the respect that I owe to myself has impelled me to dismiss from my mind, before I undertook these Memoirs, every species of bias or partiality. Not that, in point of fact, it is possible to speak of recent or contemporary events as we would write of transactions that took place under Henry VIII., nor to contemplate Fox and Pitt with the degree of abstraction and composure that we regard Marius and Sylla. Such philosophic superiority to passion, whatever pretensions to it may be set up, is not given to man.

Tacitus, who wrote of events recently performed, and who intended, as he himself assures us, if he should attain to old age, to compose the history of his own times, says, "*Dignitatem nostram a Vespasiano inchoatam, a Tito auctam, a Domitiano longius provectam, nunquam abnuerim: sed incorruptam fidem professis, nec amore quisquam, et sine odio dicendus est.*" If I might be allowed to parody the words of that historian, applying them to myself, I should say, "That I consider George III., notwithstanding the many errors of his government, which were most conspicuous during the first twenty years of his reign, as one of

his action in regard to the death of Augusta Caroline, Princess of Wirtemberg. After his trial for libel, Sir Nathaniel was confined in the King's Bench Prison, and fined £500. After expressing his regret for introducing the name of Count Woronzow, he cancelled the passage, which only appeared in the first edition. It is now incorporated in the text. The Count died in London, June 1832, aged eighty-eight.—ED.

the best princes who ever governed this country, I readily confess. Neither will I deny that I cannot recall the idea of Lord North unconnected with those engaging or elevated qualities of mind and of deportment which conciliated the affection even of his opponents. Lastly, that Lord Sackville honoured me with his friendship, and showed me marks of confidence, I avow with pride and satisfaction. But none of these circumstances would induce me to conceal or to misrepresent any fact, for the purpose of drawing a veil over their errors or political transgressions." I may further add, that never having held any employment under any Minister at any period of my life, I neither can be accused of divulging official secrets; nor am I linked, in however humble a degree, with any of those ephemeral Administrations which took place with such rapidity between 1782 and 1784.<sup>1</sup> I relate the events that I either witnessed, or of which I received the accounts from respectable testimony. How imperfect a light these sources of information enable me to throw on the period of time that I attempt to elucidate, I am fully aware; but, unfortunately, those individuals who, from their rank and situation, know most of the secrets of affairs, will generally divulge least; and even imperfect light is preferable to darkness.

I cannot indeed boast of having enjoyed the same advantage as Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, who, in the "*History of his Own Time*," says, "I have had the honour to be admitted to much free

<sup>1</sup> The Marquis of Rockingham's Ministry, formed March 1782. The Prime Minister died in July of the same year, and was succeeded by the Earl of Shelburne. The Duke of Portland's Ministry took office in April 1783, and was turned out in December of the same year on Fox's India Bill. Pitt then formed an Administration, which was destined to be one of the longest of modern times.—ED.

conversation with five of our sovereigns, King Charles II., King James II., King William III., Queen Mary, and Queen Anne." But between 1780 and 1794, during all which period I sat in Parliament,<sup>1</sup> I possessed many means and opportunities of knowing various facts from high authority, and, in some instances, of ascertaining their secret causes or springs. Lord Clarendon and Burnet are almost the only persons of eminence among us who have commemorated with ability, and at considerable length, the events of their own time. We cannot sufficiently regret that Prior did not live to accomplish the same task. That he meditated and intended it is evident from the words of his epitaph in Westminster Abbey :—

*"Sui Temporis Historiam meditantī,  
Paulatim obrepens Febris  
Operis simul et Vitæ, Filum abruptit.  
Sep. 18. An. Dom. 1721."*

The work which was actually published under that name in 1740 contained only some of the materials collected for it.<sup>2</sup> If we consider the official or diplomatic situations that Prior occupied from 1690 down to 1714, and the intimate friendship in which he lived with Charles, Earl of Dorset, the Lord Treasurer Harley, and Lord Bolingbroke, we must admit that few men could have been more competent to elucidate the reigns of William the Third and of Anne.

<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Wrixall was elected member of Parliament for Hindon borough in 1780, for Ludgershall borough, Wilts, in 1784, and for Wallingford borough, Berks, in 1790. He accepted the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds in 1794.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The "History of his Own Time," which forms one of the two volumes of Prior's miscellaneous works published in 1740, is supposed to owe little to the poet's authorship. It is, however, stated to be "compiled from his original MSS. revised and signed by himself, and copied fair for the press by Mr. Adrian Drift, his executor." It was edited by J. Bancks.—ED.



How much have we to lament that the late Mr. Fox, during his long exclusion from public employment, between 1790 and 1805, while in retirement at St. Anne's Hill, did not occupy himself in composing the history of his own time! Aspiring, as he did, not only to the fame of a statesman and an orator, but to the praise of an historian, how infinitely more valuable a legacy might he have bequeathed to his countrymen, how much more durable a monument might he have erected to himself, by such an exertion of his talents, than he has done by exhausting his efforts on the reign of James II. Not that I would be understood to express any sentiment allied to disrespect relative to the work which Lord Holland, with becoming veneration for his uncle's memory, has given to the world.<sup>1</sup> Every page of that short and unfinished production is worthy of its author, and raises him in my estimation. The "Introductory Chapter" can hardly be exceeded for profound reflection, elucidated by a severe and philosophic cast of thought, as well as by the most accurate and laborious disquisition of facts. Impartial, ardent for freedom, and indignant against tyrants, the writer is nevertheless exempt from the spirit of republicanism. The small portion of James's reign which follows, including Argyle's and Monmouth's invasions, may in a great measure be characterised by similar epithets and excites regret from presenting only a fragment. But if, instead of collating Rapin, Hume, and Burnet, or employing his time on the inspection of documents in the *Dépôt des Archives* at Paris, he had dedicated it to a delineation, however simple, of the great political scenes in which he had acted so distinguished a part, with what

<sup>1</sup> Lord Holland published Fox's "History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II." in 1808, two years after the author's death.—ED.

avidity should we not have perused the work! We might then have beheld, as in a mirror, the secret history of the Rockingham and the Coalition Administrations, drawn by a master-hand, which had propelled the ostensible Ministers of the two periods. It was thus that Clarendon beguiled the hours of unmerited disgrace and exile, when he wrote his "History of the great Rebellion." The Cardinal de Retz,<sup>1</sup> a man to whom Mr. Fox bore some analogy in certain features of his political life, of his character and fortune, made the best atonement to his country and to posterity for the irregularities and agitations which marked the zenith of his career by tracing with his own hand in his decline the outline of those transactions which he had guided or produced. We forget his deviations from prudence, his faction, and his ambition, in the elegance of his genius and the ingenuous disclosure of his errors.

Perhaps no portion of time in the course of the two last centuries offers, proportionably to its duration, so few of those interesting anecdotes where the sovereign comes personally forward to our inspection as the reign of George III. The reason is obvious, and arose out of the King's character. Charles II. and Louis XIV., surrounded by mistresses and all the dissipation of a court, presented to Burnet, to Grammont, or to Voltaire perpetual matter of entertaining recital. Even George I. and George II. offered some resources of a similar nature to Lord Melcomb<sup>2</sup> for his "Diary," and to Horace Walpole for his "Reminiscences." But his present Majesty's whole life, from the age of twenty-two

<sup>1</sup> Jean François Paul de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz, born October 1614, died 24th August 1679. His Memoirs were published for the first time in the year 1717.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Better known as George Bubb Dodington, the *Bubo* of Pope.—ED.

down to the period at which he ceased to reign, was passed either in the severe and exemplary discharge of his *public* duties of every description, according to his conception of them, or in the bosom of his family, amidst *domestic* sources of amusement. In his agricultural occupations, or when engaged in the diversions of the field, he was only seen by a few individuals, who from their official situations or dignity had access to his person. No splendid assemblies of both sexes, or festive entertainments to which beauty, rank, and pleasure, in a comprehensive sense, must have contributed, by levelling him in some measure with his guests, presented him to view divested of the forms of royalty. Unlike his predecessor, who even at an advanced age still preserved a relish for those enjoyments, equally unlike his son, the present Regent, whose graceful manners and love of social enjoyment, cemented by wine and conversation, have rendered his palace the centre of pleasures, George III., while young, neither frequented masquerades, nor ever engaged at play, nor protracted the hours of convivial festivity, nor passed his evenings in company calculated to unbend his mind from the fatigues of business and the vexations of state.

All the splendour of a court was laid aside, or only exhibited for a few hours on a birthday. Rarely during the first twenty years after his accession did he join in any scene of public amusement, if we except the diversion of the theatre. Still more rarely did he sit down at table with any of his courtiers or nobility. His repasts, private, short, and temperate, never led to the slightest excess. Hence his enemies endeavoured to represent him, most unjustly, as affecting the state of an Asiatic prince, scarcely ever visible except on the

terrace at Windsor or in the circle at a levee. "Junius," who saw him through the most unfavourable medium, and who converted his very virtues into subjects of accusation or of reproach, pictures St. James's as a court "where prayers are morality, and kneeling is religion." It was not till a period later than the point of time at which these Memoirs stop that the King began to mix in a select company, and occasionally to indulge in the pleasures of society. Previous to the year 1784, it is only in the foreign or domestic transactions of his reign, often only within the walls of one or the other House of Parliament, that the materials can generally be found for writing the internal history of the time. These remarks, I am sensible, apply principally, though not exclusively, to the portion of the present work where the scene lies wholly in England; whereas the first part traverses the Continent, through different countries from Portugal round to Naples and Tuscany.

Soon after I had completed my twenty-first year, in 1772, I went by sea to Portugal, in the capital of which kingdom,<sup>1</sup> or in its vicinity, I stayed a considerable time. Joseph, son and successor of John V., then occupied the throne; but the kingdom was governed by the celebrated Count d'Æyras, who had been recently created Marquis de Pombal.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lisbon, the celebrated earthquake at which place in 1755 the author refers to farther on.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Sebastian Joseph de Carvalho e Mello, born 13th May 1699, at Soure, a village near the town of Pombal. He was created Count d'Æyras, and subsequently Marquis de Pombal. He commenced his political career first as ambassador to the Court of St. James's, and then as Plenipotentiary at the Court of Vienna. In 1750, the year Joseph I. came to the throne of Portugal, he was made Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and in 1756 he became Prime Minister. He ruled with a rod of iron, but the reforms he introduced were complete and enduring. On the death of Joseph I. in 1777, his foes secured his dismissal from office. He died on 5th May 1782. *Memoirs of Pombal*, by John Smith, were published in 1843 (2 vols. 8vo, London), and a

Few first Ministers during the course of the last century displayed greater talents for administration or exercised more unlimited authority. The King, though only third in order of descent, was fourth in succession from the Duke of Braganza, denominated John IV., who in 1640 recovered Portugal from the Spanish dominion, and, at the time of which I speak, had passed his fifty-seventh year. He was of a good stature, but inclined to corpulency; his features regular, his eye quick and lively, if a habit of holding his mouth somewhat open had not diminished the expression of intelligence which his countenance would otherwise have conveyed. In his cheeks he had a high scorbutic humour, attributed commonly to excesses of wine, though it might partly arise from violent exercise constantly taken under a burning sun. His face, indeed, was nearly as dusky as that of a Moor; and at Fez or Mequinez, habited in the Turkish dress, with a turban on his head, he might easily have passed for Muley Ismael, the sovereign of Morocco. Never had any Lusitanian peasant coarser and darker hands. One could not look at him without recollecting how near are the shores and how similar are the climates of Portugal and of Africa.

Two passions, hunting and music, principally occupied his time, absorbed his thoughts, and divided his affections, nor was it easy to decide which of them possessed the stronger ascendant over him. In the former diversion he passed the greater part of the day; to the latter amusement his evenings were principally dedicated, either in public, when at the opera, or in private, with his family. No royal house in Europe was then so musical as that of Portugal. Joseph himself per-

formed with considerable execution on the violin ; and the three princesses, his daughters, were proficient in a greater or less degree on different instruments. If he was prevented by the weather from going out to the chase, the King had recourse for occupation to his manège. On Sundays he seldom missed attending the Italian Opera in Lisbon ; but he likewise maintained another opera at Belem, near the capital.<sup>1</sup> I have been present at this latter performance, to which only foreign ministers, officers, persons belonging to the court, and foreigners of condition were admitted, all of them gratuitously. The house itself was of contracted dimensions ; the pit not being calculated to contain more than about one hundred and thirty individuals. Boxes, indeed, in the proper acceptation of the term, there were none, the King, Queen, and royal family being seated in a gallery fronting the stage, elevated considerably above the body of the house. One small box was constructed on each side ; that on the right hand being appropriated to the Patriarch, or head of the Portuguese Church, whom I have seen present at the performance ;<sup>2</sup> the other was reserved for any stranger of high rank who might visit Portugal.

<sup>1</sup> A small palace in the suburbs of Lisbon.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> “ But of all the ecclesiastical extravagances of this reign [that of John V.] that which most distinguished it was the organisation of a Church establishment on the model of that of Rome. For this purpose, John, having entered ardently into the project of his clergy, applied for, and succeeded in obtaining from the Court of Rome, permission to found a higher ecclesiastical establishment than any hitherto held in the country ; and a dignitary was appointed to preside over the Church in Portugal, under the title of Patriarch. To this high office was added a Sacred College of twenty-four prelates, to whom was granted by royal ordinance the right of being addressed by the title of Excellency. . . . To render the resemblance of this ecclesiastical body to the Court of Rome still more striking, the vestures of the Patriarch on days of solemnity were made similar to those of the Pope himself, while the prelates wore the scarlet robes in imitation of the cardinals.”—*The Marquis of Pombal*, by the Conde da Carnota, 2d edition, 1871, pp. 11, 12.—ED.

The circumstance which distinguished this entertainment from any other of the same kind which I ever witnessed, and which may appear so extraordinary as hardly to obtain credit, consisted in the total exclusion of women, not only from the pit, but from the stage, either as spectators or as actresses. No female could obtain admission. The reason commonly assigned by the court for proscribing the whole sex from any participation in an amusement of which, in all other European countries, they constitute the principal ornament and the soul, was that there were no proper place for ladies. But it might have been answered, that nothing could be easier than to construct side-boxes for their reception. Even this reason could not explain their exclusion from the stage, on which none except Italian *castrati* were ever admitted to sing or to perform any part. Battistini, who filled with great distinction the first female characters, was engaged, not only for his superior vocal excellence, but for his feminine appearance and admirable resemblance to a woman when he was dressed in female attire. So complete was the deception, that it never would have occurred to any uninformed person to doubt for an instant of his being what he personated. Even the ballets were all performed by men or boys, habited in the costume of nymphs, shepherdesses, and goddesses. This exclusion of all females, except the Queen and Princesses, rendered the spectacle, though otherwise magnificent in machinery and decorations, as well as scientific in point of musical execution, comparatively insipid, dull, and destitute of interest or animation. Incredible as it may seem, the passion of jealousy constituted the cause of so singular a prohibition. The Queen of Portugal, though at this time she was considerably advanced towards her sixtieth

year, yet watched every motion of her husband with all the vigilant anxiety of a young woman; and in order the better to secure his personal fidelity, she took care to remove from before his eyes as much as possible every temptation to inconstancy. The ladies-in-waiting and maids of honour who attended their Majesties in public, must have been selected for their want of all attractions; and they were, besides, too far advanced in years to be longer capable of inspiring any sentiment except respect. The Portuguese females who accompanied Catherine of Braganza in 1662, when she came over to England in order to espouse Charles II., whose total deficiency in personal charms is so eloquently described in the "*Mémoires de Grammont*," could not possibly exceed in that particular the attendants on Marianna Victoria, wife of Joseph I.

Nor was her vigilance confined to the opera. She took similar precautions against any rival or intruder in the King's affections whenever he went out to the chase. Whether the diversion was hunting, or shooting, or falconing, she was constantly at his side. No woman in Europe rode bolder or with more skill. Her figure almost defied the powers of description on these occasions. She sat astride, as was the universal custom in Portugal, and wore English leather breeches, frequently black, over which she threw a petticoat which did not always conceal her legs. A jacket of cloth or of stuff, and a cocked hat, sometimes laced, at other times without ornament, completed the masculine singularity of her appearance. When, after having let loose the falcon, she followed him with her eye in his flight, she always threw the reins on her horse's neck, allowing him to carry her wherever he pleased, fearless of accidents. She was admitted to be an excellent



shot, seldom missing the bird at which she fired, even when flying. But this diversion had nearly produced a most tragical result, as a few years before I visited Portugal she very narrowly missed killing the King with a ball, which actually grazed his temple. Few princes in modern times have had more hairbreadth escapes from danger or assassination than Joseph I. experienced, on which subject I shall have occasion to say much in the course of these observations.

In the year 1772, the Court of Lisbon offered scarcely any sources of amusement to a foreigner. Neither levees nor drawing-rooms were ever held, except on birthdays, and on a few particular festivals. The King, Queen, his brother Don Pedro, his three daughters, and the young Prince of Beira lived all under the same roof, and inhabited a long wooden range of apartments at Belem, lower down the bank of the Tagus than Lisbon. The terrors and recollections of the earthquake of 1755 were so deeply impressed on their minds, that they preferred residing in a wooden building, however mean in its fabrication or inconvenient, rather than encounter the perils annexed to a stone edifice. Joseph had never slept under a house properly so denominated during near seventeen years. Wherever he moved, either wooden barracks or tents were provided for his accommodation. I have seen tents pitched for his reception in the fields adjoining the palace of Maffra, while that immense and costly edifice was totally abandoned, neglected, and unfurnished. These precautions, however singular and almost pusillanimous they may seem, were nevertheless necessary in Portugal. Experience had fully demonstrated that the most solid, massy, and well-constructed buildings of stone only exposed the inhabitant to greater and more inevitable destruction

in the event of an earthquake, because the resistance made by such materials to the undulation or shock produced their overthrow. On the contrary, any structure composed of wood, supported, like the barracks inhabited by the royal family, on pillars of the same materials, yielding to the concussion of the earth, rocked and waved with the convulsion, thus escaping its worst effects.

No splendour or exhibition of state was maintained by the King of Portugal, who, though he scarcely ever failed to attend, with the royal family, every week at the bull feasts and at the Italian Opera in Lisbon, yet was always understood to be present incognito. The only deviation from this practice took place when the court went annually, in time of carnival, to the palace of *Salva Tierra*, situated several leagues higher up the Tagus than the metropolis. The King remained there till the month of March, and all the foreign Ministers usually attended him. Hunting-parties, to which strangers of condition were admitted, constituted the occupation of the day, followed in the evening by an opera, like that of *Belem*, open gratuitously to all such persons as had been presented to the sovereign. Joseph expended no less a sum than about forty thousand pounds sterling annually on the diversion of the opera; yet he was likewise fond of play, and passed much time at the card-table. Previous to the memorable earthquake of 1755, he was considered as temperate, drinking usually water at his meals; but such was the effect produced on his mind, and so severe the dejection of spirits which he experienced after that awful convulsion of the planet, that it seriously affected his health. His physicians prescribed the use of wine as necessary to restore his constitution; a prescription which proved so agreeable to the patient,

that it was believed his Majesty indulged himself too freely in its use. At an earlier period of his life he was supposed to have been guilty of excesses of another kind, and to have given the Queen frequent occasion for jealousy; nor had the partiality of Joseph towards the sex by any means become extinct with the decline of years. But his attachments or amours were always secret, decorous, and conducted with a becoming regard to public opinion, as well as with a due attention to his domestic and conjugal felicity. No mistress, like Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry in France, under Louis XV., or Madame Chevalier at Petersburg, under Paul I., dishonoured and disgraced the Court of Portugal.

Joseph, considered in his kingly character and capacity, though not to be ranked among the first princes in vigour and ability who then reigned in Europe, was not deficient in qualities befitting the throne. If he felt his own inability to govern, he demonstrated no common discernment and force of mind in the selection of a Minister to whom he delegated that office. The Marquis de Pombal exercised, in fact, all the functions of the monarchy. He possessed nearly as unlimited an ascendant over his master as the Cardinal of Lerma<sup>1</sup> did over Philip III., or the Conde d'Olivarez<sup>2</sup> over Philip IV., kings of Spain, and was accustomed to transact public business with his sovereign at hours and seasons usually dedicated to pleasure or lost in sleep. The King very frequently signed papers of the greatest consequence after midnight, at which time the Marquis commonly waited on him for the purpose.

<sup>1</sup> Francisco de Roxas de Sandoval, Marquis de Denia, Duque de Lerma. In 1618 he was made a cardinal, an advancement which caused him to lose the favour of his sovereign. He died in 1625.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Gaspar de Guzman, third Conde d'Olivarez, Duque de San Lucar de Barrameda, born 6th January 1587, died 22d July 1645.—ED.

The hereditary superstition which characterised the House of Braganza, and in the practice of which Joseph himself had been educated, which distinguished his father John V., and which survived with augmented force in Joseph's daughter, till she became alienated in mind, by no means existed in him. The seizure and expulsion of the Jesuits, a measure of great energy and not unaccompanied with danger, sufficiently manifested his superiority to the bigoted veneration felt for that order of men among the majority of his subjects. If he possessed no taste for the fine arts, nor evinced any passion for learning and polite letters, he at least extended protection to their professors. During the period of two-and-twenty years that he had then reigned since the decease of John V., a great and salutary change had taken place among the Portuguese in all the attainments of a civilised people. Establishments for the education of the young nobility and gentry had been founded which would have done honour to Great Britain, and which, though originating with the Minister, yet could only have been fully accomplished by the consent of the sovereign.

These laudable acts of government were nevertheless contrasted with corresponding defects of administration, some of which might be justly attributed to the Marquis de Pombal, while others seemed personally to reproach the King. The people universally and loudly complained of oppression. In the royal household mismanagement prevailed to such a degree that almost all the domestic servants and menial attendants of the court, having been unpaid for several years, were in the lowest stage of distress. The reverse had been the case under his predecessor, John V. Joseph's revenues were commonly supposed to amount to two millions sterling, while the national expenditure did not

usually exceed a moiety of that sum. Yet the footmen who followed the royal carriages in public were left almost without the means of even procuring sustenance. I never saw the King and Queen in any carriage, except a sort of calèche or chaise drawn by two mules of no uncommon beauty. In this equipage, which was nothing less than royal, they always attended the bull feasts. When her Majesty, accompanied by the Princesses, her daughters, went to say mass or to perform her devotions, at some church in the vicinity of Lisbon, the coach was drawn by only a pair of horses of a very inferior description, and with such a set of harness as we should scarcely consider to be good enough for a hackney-coach. About forty horse-guards accompanied them, and they generally distributed some money to the populace, or rather the beggars, who assembled in groups at the door of the church.

I went one day to look at the royal carriages kept at Alcantara, about a mile out of Lisbon. There were at least thirty, some of which had cost, as I was assured, two hundred thousand crusadoes,<sup>1</sup> or twenty thousand pounds sterling. They were very magnificent, and had all been built either in Rome or at Paris. London had not then begun to supply the Continent with that article of luxury. Among the royal carriages I was struck with the coach in which John IV. made his public entry into the capital after recovering Portugal from the Spaniards. It nearly realised the descriptions given us of those vehicles soon after their first appearance or invention in the sixteenth century. The carriage in question had been constructed in 1641, and was consequently above a hundred and thirty years

<sup>1</sup> A Portuguese coin of 480 reis, so called from having a cross on the reverse. Its value is somewhat over two shillings.—ED.

old at the time when I saw it, and might more properly be denominated a chamber on wheels than a coach in the modern acceptation of the term, as it was capable of containing ten or twelve persons with the utmost convenience. The sides were open; the windows, resembling the lattices of our farmhouses, divided into small panes, with casements for the admission of air. It was preserved with pious veneration, as a monument of the emancipation of the kingdom by the first prince of the House of Braganza. Henry IV. was seated in just such another coach when he was stabbed by Ravail-lac, in the year 1610, in the Rue de la Ferronnerie, at Paris.

Joseph had twice escaped from assassination; the first time in 1758, and the last only two years before I visited Lisbon. The former attempt, which occupies a memorable place among the tragical events of the eighteenth century, may rank with Damien's attempt on Louis XV.'s life in 1755, and with the attack made in 1771 on Stanislaus, King of Poland. All the leading events of the conspiracy of the Duke d'Aveiro and the Marquis de Tavora in 1758, I have often heard recounted by contemporary witnesses. The Duke d'Aveiro, whose family name was Mascarenhas, descended from Don George, a natural son of John II., King of Portugal, one of the most illustrious, wise, and enterprising princes who has reigned in modern ages, the contemporary of our Henry VII. To his exertions, sustained by the perseverance of Vasco de Gama, we owe in an eminent degree the discovery of a passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope. D'Aveiro's talents appear to have been very moderate, and his courage very equivocal; but his temper, ferocious as well as vindictive, rendered him capable of embracing the most flagitious measures for the

gratification of his revenge.<sup>1</sup> The King of Portugal's escape, which was altogether fortuitous, resulted from the presence of mind manifested by the coachman who drove the royal carriage. This man, finding that several shots or balls had passed through it behind, and not doubting that Joseph was wounded, instead of proceeding forward, immediately turned round his mules and took the road that led to the house of the King's surgeon. By this sudden and unexpected manœuvre Joseph avoided falling into the hands of four other armed parties of conspirators, who were posted at different places where it was known he must pass in his way to the palace.

The old Marchioness of Tavora formed the soul of this sanguinary enterprise, which conducted the principal persons engaged in it to a cruel and ignominious death; revenge, heightened by personal enmity towards the King and the first Minister, who had refused to raise the Marquis of Tavora to the dignity of a duke, rather than any well-ascertained intention or expectation of subverting the government and dethroning the Braganza family, seems to have stimulated the conspirators to so atrocious an undertaking. Precisely similar motives impelled the late Duke of Orleans to produce those commotions which eventually overturned the French throne and led to the horrors of the Revolution. It was not, in the first instance, ambition or the hope of reigning, so much as personal hatred and revenge. The late Duke of Dorset, who, from the situation that he occupied during several years as ambassador to the Court of Versailles, had opportunities of obtaining the most authentic information, has many

<sup>1</sup> When the Duke was arrested his papers were seized, and among them was found this sentence—"To destroy the authority of King Sebastian [Pombal] we must annihilate that of King Joseph."—ED.

times assured me of this fact. He knew it from Marie Antoinette herself. She constituted the principal object of the Duke of Orleans' detestation, whose malignity was not so much levelled against Louis XVI. as against the Queen. That princess had given him many causes of aversion, one of which consisted in endeavouring successfully to prevent the marriage of his daughter, Made-moiselle d'Orleans, with the Duke d'Angoulême. Marie Antoinette naturally wished to unite her own daughter in marriage with the young prince,<sup>1</sup> as she thereby secured to her the succession to the throne of France in case Louis XVI. should not leave behind him any son. The Duke of Dorset told me, that, as early as 1786 or 1787, the Queen had said to him, on her seeing the Duke of Orleans at Versailles, "*Monsieur le Duc, regardez cette homme là. Il me déteste, et il a juré ma perte. Je la vois dans ses yeux, toutes les fois qu'il me fixe. Il ne sera jamais content, jusqu'à ce qu'il me voit étendue morte à ses pieds.*" He lived in fact to witness her tragical end, but he survived her only a very short time. I return from this digression to the Portuguese conspirators. They executed their attempt like men destitute of courage; for if the first band, who intercepted the King on his return from Belem, had fired into the carriage as he advanced, instead of waiting, as they did, till he had passed, before they discharged their pieces, he must have fallen. The ball with which he was wounded passed between his side and his arm, tearing the flesh of both, but without inflicting any severe wound.

The consternation excited by the attempt

<sup>1</sup> Marie Thérèse Charlotte, daughter of Louis XVI., born 19th December 1778, exchanged for French prisoners in Austria, 26th December 1795, married to her cousin the Duc d'Angoulême, 10th June 1799, died 19th October 1851.—ED.



became augmented by the obscurity in which it was enveloped, the court remaining for some weeks in total ignorance of the authors of the conspiracy, as the conspirators did, on the other hand, in equal uncertainty respecting the nature and consequences of the King's wounds. It is a fact that the Duke d'Aveiro and the Marquis of Tavora repaired almost daily to the King's apartment to make their inquiries in person after his health, expressing the utmost abhorrence of the treason. They were even admitted to his presence, but in a chamber intentionally kept so dark as to render it impossible for them to ascertain the probability of his recovery. Meanwhile the vigilance of the Marquis de Pombal, aided, as is said, by some imprudent expressions of the Duke d'Aveiro, enabled the Minister to trace, and to ascertain, the guilt of the conspirators. They were then arrested and brought to trial. The Duke d'Aveiro, the Marquis of Tavora, and his two sons, expired on the wheel;<sup>1</sup> while the old Marchioness, who, in consideration of her sex, was sentenced to be beheaded, ascended the scaffold with a firm step, betrayed neither fear nor contrition, and laid down her head on the block as she would have done on a pillow.

Haughty and imperious in her character, she was restrained by no considerations of pity or of humanity when her vengeance, her ambition, or her interest impelled her. The meetings of the conspirators were frequently held in a summer-house situate in the garden of the Marquis of Tavora's palace at Lisbon, with which it was connected by a long wooden gallery. It happened that a young Portuguese lady of noble extraction, but of reduced

<sup>1</sup> Luiz Bernardo, and Jose Maria de Tavora. Several others among the conspirators were executed. The title of Tavora was abolished, and a river bearing that name was ordered from thenceforward to be called the "River of Death."—ED.

circumstances, who lived in the Marchioness's family as her companion, surprised at observing lights one evening in this summer-house, and altogether without suspicion of the cause, was attracted by curiosity to approach the place. As she advanced along the gallery that led to it, she heard voices in earnest conversation, and on coming nearer soon distinguished that of the Marchioness, who seemed to be animated by some extraordinary cause to a pitch of uncommon violence. She listened during a few seconds, and then, apprehensive of being discovered in such a situation, she was about to return from whence she came, when the door suddenly opening, the Marchioness herself appeared. Their surprise was mutual, and the latter demanded, with much agitation, what cause had brought her to that place. She answered that her astonishment at observing lights in the summer-house had led her to ascertain the reason. "You have, then, no doubt," said the Marchioness, "overheard our conversation?" The young lady protested that she was perfectly ignorant of any part of it, adding that as soon as she distinguished the Marchioness's voice, her respect led her to return to the palace, which she was about to do at the moment when the door opened. But the Marchioness, who had too much at stake to be so easily satisfied or deceived, assuming a tranquil air, and affecting to repose a confidence in her, "The Marquis and I," rejoined she, "have had a serious and a violent quarrel, during the course of which he had the rudeness to contradict me in the most insulting manner, and he even carried his audacity to such a point as to give me the lie. I burst out of the room, unable to restrain my indignation, and no longer mistress of my emotions. Did you not hear him give me the lie at the time I opened the door?" "I did, madam," imprudently replied the

unfortunate lady. Aware from that instant that the nature of their meeting and of the subjects agitated at it was now in some measure discovered, she instantly determined to prevent the possibility of its being further divulged. Next morning the body of the unhappy listener was found in one of the streets of Lisbon wrapt in a sheet, scarcely cold, and the blood still oozing from various wounds inflicted on her with a dagger. It was universally believed at the time that she had been put to death by secret directions issued from the palace of Tavora; but the power of that great family, and the frequency of similar spectacles in the Portuguese capital, silenced all judicial inquiry into the causes of her tragical end. The Marchioness expiated her crime on the scaffold. Her daughter-in-law, the young Marchioness of Tavora, alone, who was daughter to the Duke d'Aveiro, exempted from the general destruction of her family, either on account of her presumed innocence, or, as was pretended by others, from motives of private partiality on the part of the King, was immured in a convent.<sup>1</sup> She was, I believe, still living in 1772 under confinement.

The second attempt made on Joseph's life arose from the irritated feelings of a poor Portuguese peasant. This man, driven to despair by the conduct of the King's domestics, who had forcibly seized on his carts and cattle, rushed furiously on his Majesty as he was going out to hunt, and aimed a blow with a long pole at his head, which narrowly missed him. It happened at the palace of Villa Viciosa, the ancient patrimonial residence of the Dukes of Braganza, where the King used sometimes

<sup>1</sup> The belief that the conspiracy originated in the disgust felt by her relations at her intimacy with the King is mentioned in a despatch from the English Minister (Mr. Hay), containing particulars for the information of George II. See *The Marquis of Pombal*, by the Conde da Carnota, 1871, p. 117.—ED.

to repair for a short time. The peasant was not executed, but still remained, as rumour asserted, in a dungeon at Belem when I was in Portugal. Two such attacks, though of very opposite kinds, had rendered Joseph timid, and induced him to take many precautions for his preservation against similar efforts of private vengeance or treason. Even at the Italian Opera in Lisbon, which he scarcely ever failed to attend, yet when he went, as was his custom, between the acts, from the royal box in front of the stage to a side-box from which he viewed the ballets, he always passed through a close passage well secured, constructed on purpose, with a view to protect his person from any act of violence.

Marianna Victoria, Queen of Portugal and wife of Joseph, was a daughter of Philip V., King of Spain, by Elizabeth Farnese, his second wife, sole representative and heiress of that celebrated family, herself a woman of no ordinary energy of character. The Princess had been betrothed when a child to Louis XV. She was even sent to France, and remained in that country during several years; but on the death of the Regent Duke of Orleans in December 1723, when the government fell into the hands of the Duke de Bourbon, one of the first acts of his administration was to dissolve the unfinished marriage and to send the Princess back to Madrid. In the year 1729, at the age of eleven, she was carried by her father, Philip, to Badajoz, and there married to Joseph, then hereditary Prince of Portugal, who himself had not attained his fourteenth year. The nuptials were immediately solemnised, the bride and bridegroom being put into the same bed together, in presence of the great officers of the court; but it was near six years afterwards,

in December 1734, she brought into the world a daughter, subsequently Queen of Portugal.<sup>1</sup>

Marianna Victoria was said to have been very agreeable in her person when young, but in 1772 no traces remained of that beauty. Her figure was short and thick, her face red, her nose large, and her manner destitute of softness or elegance. There was, indeed, nothing feminine in her appearance or demeanour. Nevertheless her eyes, which were dark, lively, and piercing, retained their original lustre. She wore a profusion of rouge; her neck and shoulders, whether at church, at the opera, or at a bull feast, being always bare; and she seemed to be not only in possession of health, but capable of supporting the roughest exercise or most severe fatigue. Her arms were brown and sunburnt from her perpetually following the chase. Those persons who knew her Majesty well always assured me that she neither wanted spirit nor ability, though she never attempted to possess power, nor had ever attained any political influence. All her anxiety seemed to be confined to the person of her royal partner, and did not extend to the guidance of state affairs. If any opinion might be formed of her religion from her behaviour at mass, she was assuredly no bigot. I was accustomed to frequent, from motives of curiosity, the Church of the Necessidades, and that of St. Francisco da Paola, where she constantly attended, with the Princesses, her daughters; and I may truly assert, that I never saw any woman who manifested less attention while at her devotions.

Of a different character from her mother in that respect was the Princess of Brazil, Maria, eldest of the three daughters of Joseph, and presumptive

<sup>1</sup> Maria Francis Isabella, who died insane in the Brazils in the year 1816.—ED.

heiress to the crown of Portugal. In *her*, a gloomy and severe spirit of superstition formed the predominant feature. Her mind was said to be deeply impressed with the tragical catastrophe of the Duke d'Aveiro and his associates, whose fate she was believed to lament, as having been unmerited or unjust. To her reflections upon those terrible executions, heightened by the remonstrances or reproaches of her confessor, has been indeed generally attributed the subsequent alienation of her understanding. In her person she was taller than either of her sisters, as well as more slender; of a pale and wan complexion, that seemed to indicate melancholy; her features prominent, strong, and altogether destitute of any attractions. In all the duties and departments of private life she was exemplary. Married to her uncle, only brother to the King, they exhibited a model of nuptial felicity. The union, however repugnant it may be to our modes of thinking, and in some measure contrary to nature, yet had been fruitful. They had then two sons and a daughter living. The desire of preventing any possibility of a disputed succession between the collateral male heir to the throne and the female in direct descent dictated this species of incestuous marriage, which, whatever sanction it may derive from antiquity among the Ptolemies or the Seleucidæ, and even among the Cæsars, can plead no parallel among the other royal houses of modern Europe. It forms not the least singular circumstance of the transaction, that so far from any compulsion having been used to accomplish it, the Princess, from her early youth entertained a strong partiality towards Don Pedro, her future husband. She was near thirty-eight years old when I visited Portugal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Queen Maria married her uncle, who reigned jointly with her as

All the talents of the female part of the Braganza family were said to be concentrated in Donna Maria Anna, second of Joseph's daughters. Shorter and thicker than the Princess of Brazil, she was more agreeable in her countenance; possessing a ruddy complexion, as well as a more animated expression of features. Her mind was likewise expanded and her understanding cultivated by polite knowledge. Many of her hours were dedicated to reading, and she was regarded as superior to bigotry. In addition to these solid endowments, she joined great taste and skill in music with a fine voice. Though the most accomplished of the three sisters, she was nevertheless doomed to remain unmarried in her father's court, having attained in 1772 her thirty-sixth year. Nature had been in some respects more bountiful to the third princess, Donna Maria Benedicta, who was likewise considerably younger, being only six-and-twenty years old at this time. Though low in stature, clumsy, and much inclined to embonpoint, her face was very handsome; her eyes dark and eloquent, her complexion fair, the contour of her countenance rather round than oval, and her features small as well as delicate. But she was not considered to possess the superiority of mind that distinguished Maria Anna. About seven years before the time of which I speak, a treaty of marriage had been set on foot between this princess and the Emperor Joseph II., then recently become a widower by the death of his first wife, a daughter

Pedro III. from 1777 to 1786. From 1786 to 1792 she reigned alone, but in this latter year she fell into a miserable state of idiocy, and a Regency was formed, with her son John as Regent. It is said that Dr. Willis was sent for to Lisbon to attend her. She was accustomed whenever any stranger approached her to begin screaming most violently. The doctor, aware of this, the moment he came into her presence, uttered such frightful screams as quite quieted her, but he could do nothing towards her cure. On the death of Maria in 1816, her son came to the throne as John VI.—ED.

of Don Philip, Duke of Parma. The negotiation proceeded so far that preparations were made for transporting her from Lisbon to Flanders, on her way to Vienna, and a ship, constructed for the purpose in the Brazils, magnificently decorated, lay ready in the Tagus. But the intrigues and exertions of the old Queen Dowager of Spain, mother of Charles III., and grandmother of the Princess herself, who was incensed at the endeavours of the Marquis de Pombal to assume the exclusive merit of this alliance, finally prevented its completion.

I have been assured at Vienna, that the pretext used to indispose the Austrian court from accomplishing the projected nuptials was the representation made of the improbability of Maria Benedicta producing children, on account of her tendency to become corpulent. Incredible and unnatural as the fact may seem, she was married, several years afterwards, in 1777, when turned of thirty years of age, to her own nephew, her sister's son, the young Prince of Beyra, eventual heir to the throne of Portugal. The ceremony was performed in Joseph's apartments as he lay expiring; and they lived together many years, but never had issue. There seems to have been no rational excuse or adequate motive assigned for this second union in the same family, which impresses with a degree of horror, or at least of disgust, and was in itself the more remarkable, as the Portuguese women of condition seldom bear children if not married before twenty-eight or thirty years of age. Catherine of Portugal, daughter of John IV., who was the wife of our Charles II., and who espoused him at an earlier age, I believe when about twenty-four, never brought him any issue, male or female; but Burnet says, that the King himself told him (Dr. Burnet) that "she had been with child." She even once mis-



carried, when considerably advanced in her pregnancy, if we may believe the same historical authority; but, as it is asserted (I think by Dr. Lucas, in his "History of England") that Charles had fifty-three natural children, by different mistresses, in the course of his life, we must suppose that his failure of legitimate issue originated on the side of his queen. Some excuse may be suggested for the marriage of the eldest daughter of Joseph with his brother, Don Pedro, where no direct male issue existed to inherit the crown; but it was reserved for the family of Braganza thus to exhibit to mankind, in the eighteenth century, the extraordinary spectacle of a youth of fifteen espousing his own aunt at thirty. From such a matrimonial connection it can neither excite surprise nor regret that there should have been no descendants.

The Prince of Beyra himself, eldest son of the Princess of Brazil and of Don Pedro, was then the Marcellus of Portugal, towards whom all eyes were turned, and from whose future auspicious government political miracles were fondly anticipated. It may excite the more surprise that such expectations should have been entertained, when I add that in 1772 he had only completed the eleventh year of his age. I have seen him many times, as he never failed to attend the royal family in public, at the bull feasts, at church, and everywhere except at the Italian Opera, a diversion for which he manifested a decided aversion. He was tall and manly for his age, though his face was pale and delicate, and he appeared to have a weak or defective sight. His features and his expression of countenance indicated intelligence. The stories of his capacity and dawning expansion of mind had obtained universal credit. Some instances of the goodness of his disposition and the liberality of his temper I have

heard which seemed to be entitled to belief; but no inference as to his future character could be safely drawn from these tales. Joseph, during the reign of his father, had excited similar expectations, which he by no means fulfilled after he ascended the throne. His grandson, who was likewise named Joseph, died at about twenty-seven years of age in 1788, of the small-pox, which the bigoted prejudices and ignorance of his mother had prevented her from giving him by inoculation; leaving, as I before observed, no issue by his aunt, to whom he had been married during several years.

With Don Pedro, father and great-uncle to the Prince of Beyra, I shall conclude my remarks on the royal house of Portugal. He was several years younger than the King; not inclined, like Joseph, to corpulency; of a sallow complexion; equally destitute in his person, as in his manners, of elegance of grace, and no way distinguished by natural endowments of any kind. He excelled in no exercises of the body, and possessed in his features no expression of intellect. His faculties were, indeed, very contracted, and altogether unfit for the conduct of public affairs. Possessing neither political power nor influence, he could only be considered as a fixture of the court; and never was any prince a more perfect cypher. He enjoyed no command, military or civil; not even a separate establishment or household. When the King hunted, Don Pedro accompanied him, as he equally did to the opera or to mass, never absenting himself except on account of indisposition. He had constructed a palace at Cayluze, about six English miles from Lisbon; but Don Pedro never resided there, though he frequently attended his brother to the chase, commonly alighting for a few minutes in order to hear mass at Cayluze. Those who knew him intimately

assured me that he was of a devout, friendly, and benevolent disposition. On Joseph's decease, in February 1777, when his consort became queen in her own right, he was made King-matrimonial, by the name of Don Pedro III., as Henry, Lord Darnley, became in Scotland on his marriage with Mary Stuart. He survived his elder brother above nine years, dying in May 1786.

The public entertainment or exhibition which then distinguished Lisbon from all other capitals of Europe was the celebration of bull feasts. They were held every Sunday during the summer and autumn. I have been present at many of them. However barbarous in some respects the diversion might justly be esteemed, it is the only spectacle that I ever witnessed which could be said to realise the amphitheatrical games of ancient Rome, exhibited in the circus. They were already extinct in Spain, where Charles III. had abolished them on his ascending the throne in 1759.<sup>1</sup> Joseph and the Queen his wife, on the contrary, nourished a decided passion for these games of Moresco origin, which they never failed to attend, unless prevented by illness. I have seen the King present there, though one of his eyes was swelled and bandaged, caused by the effect of a spark that had flown into it from the flint of his fowling-piece when firing it at the chase. Those persons who have formed their ideas of bull feasts from the entertaining descriptions of the Countess d'Aulnoi,<sup>2</sup> which she has enlivened by amorous as well as by tragical adventures,

<sup>1</sup> They were, however, revived there soon afterwards; and on one occasion Nelson expressed the disgust with which he had witnessed a bull-fight at Cadiz.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Marie Catherine Jumelle de Berneville, Comtesse d'Aunoy (or Aulnoy), died in 1705. Her "*Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne*" were published in 1690, and her "*Mémoires Historiques*" in 1692. She is best known by her collection of Fairy Tales.—ED.

and which were written at Madrid under the reign of Charles II., last prince of the Austrian line, in 1679 and 1680, would have esteemed the diversion tame as it was exhibited at Lisbon in presence of Joseph. Yet it was not altogether divested of something that reminded me of the tournaments and exercises of chivalry with which our imaginations are so warmly impressed in youth. The Portuguese bull feasts were celebrated in a large wooden amphitheatre, capable of containing many thousand persons, surrounded with benches below to a considerable height, which were surrounded by tiers of boxes. The arena was ample and spacious. When the champion who was about to engage the bull, gaily dressed, mounted on a spirited horse, his spear in his hand, appeared upon the ground, the effect of the spectacle is not easy to describe in adequate terms. From sixteen to twenty bulls were regularly sacrificed every Sunday; and though circular pieces of leather were fastened on their horns in order to prevent their ripping up or mortally wounding the combatants, yet I have witnessed many very severe and several nearly fatal accidents. Prodigious dexterity and vigour were displayed by some of the horsemen, particularly by a Castilian, whom I have often seen drive his spear at the first thrust direct into the bull's heart, when the animal was running furiously at him. The amphitheatre then rang with applauses.

It frequently happened that the bulls wanted spirit or inclination for the contest. In those cases, the spectacle became rather a butchery than a combat or an amusement; but some of them would not have disgraced a Roman amphitheatre, if (as I have been assured was customary a century earlier) their horns, instead of being blunted or covered, had been filed and sharpened

to a point. Several of the men who fought on foot exhibited extraordinary agility and coolness in eluding the rage of the incensed animal; but it must be remembered that they were commonly six or seven combined, all armed with long spears. I have seen women engage the bull, ride up and wound him. Two in particular, who were *dancerinas*, or posture-girls, one a Venetian, the other a Spaniard, habited as men, and sitting astride, possessed great firmness, and excited general admiration. Sometimes the bulls were furnished by the court. I have beheld twenty killed in the course of three hours, eight of which were given by the King, as many more by Don Pedro, his brother, two by the Duke de Cadaval, and two by the Patriarch of Lisbon. After having witnessed several of these exhibitions, I confess that I became disgusted with them. The most interesting part of the spectacle consisted in the assemblage of spectators, particularly ladies, who filled the boxes. Even the seats in the pit were generally crowded with females. The Queen and her three daughters never failed to attend in the royal box, though they were considered to be there incognito. However barbarous the diversion must be regarded, it always reminded me of Milton's description of the entertainments—

“Where throngs of knights and barons bold,  
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold;  
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
Rain influence, and judge the prize.”

As soon as the bull feast ended, which was commonly about six o'clock, the King, Queen, and royal family immediately repaired to the Italian Opera, which was situate in the same quarter of Lisbon. Such was the invariable usage or etiquette every Sunday. There, as at the bull feast, though seated in the front of the theatre, they were sup-

posed to preserve their incognito. Joseph's dress on these occasions was always a full-trimmed suit of silk or of cloth, either quite plain or embroidered with white silk; the sumptuary laws of Portugal prohibiting embroidery of gold or silver. He wore a flowing tie-wig, as we see George II. represented in all his portraits; and the Portuguese Order of Christ across his breast. The Queen and Princesses were covered with diamonds, in particular, the Princess of Brazil; but the Queen alone wore rouge, from the use of which her daughters abstained. During the course of the performance his Majesty never failed to go round to his private box, close to the stage, in order to view the ballets, after each of which he returned to the royal family. On these little excursions, which he always seemed to enjoy, and during which he generally made the best use of his time with his opera-glass in contemplating the female part of the audience who filled the side boxes, several noblemen accompanied him. The Count de Prado alone possessed the privilege of being seated when attending the sovereign, a mark of distinguished predilection. To him Joseph appeared to communicate all his confidential discourse, while the other individuals in attendance remained standing behind him. Even the Duke de Cadaval, though the sole person of that high rank in the kingdom of Portugal (there being no other since the extinction of the Dukedom of Aveiro), was never permitted to sit down in company with the King. After the Count de Prado, the two Counts of Cantineida and of Arcos, sons of the Marquis de Marialva, whose name always brought Gil Blas before my imagination, enjoyed, in 1772, the highest place in Joseph's personal favour. The Count de Cantineida was the only nobleman in

the kingdom allowed by a special grace of the crown to drive in a coach and six, with which equipage the King himself had presented him.

The memorable earthquake of the 1st of November 1775 had impressed on almost every part of Lisbon the most awful traces of its existence and ravages at the time when I visited that capital. Many edifices still remained exactly in the condition that they were left by it, presenting such scenes of devastation and destruction as would have been vainly sought for elsewhere in any part of Europe. Among them, the ancient palace of the Dukes of Braganza, which was built on a commanding eminence in the centre of the metropolis, and the Cathedral of Lisbon, stood conspicuous. Both these majestic structures hourly threatened to crush the tenant or the devotee who ventured to enter them. Yet the former pile was inhabited by various families or individuals, who, pressed by necessity, sought shelter under the tottering roof; and superstition or devotion had consecrated chapels in the latter, amidst the ruins of altars and domes; where masses were daily celebrated. I was led to visit the cathedral by the hope of finding the tomb of Camoens, the celebrated Portuguese poet, whose body, as I had been assured, was there interred. But I could discover no proofs of any such interment, though I made every inquiry; and I have reason to believe, after all the researches in my power, that as he unquestionably expired in a public hospital of a disease which, from its contagious nature, resembled the plague, he was thrown into a common grave, with a number of other dead bodies. It is certain that no monument was ever erected to his memory.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1598 D. Gonçalo Continho marked the place of his burial with a marble slab bearing an appropriate inscription. All traces of the memorial were lost during the great earthquake.—ED.

A striking and a melancholy conformity exists between the destiny of the two most illustrious men of genius whom Spain and Portugal have produced in modern ages—I mean Cervantes and Camoens—a conformity which reflects no honour on those countries, nor on the sovereigns and ministers who thus abandoned them to the rigors of adversity. Both served on expeditions undertaken against the Mahometans in the capacity of private soldiers, and both were wounded. Camoens lost an eye before the town of Ceuta in Morocco, and Cervantes lost his left hand at the celebrated naval battle of Lepanto, gained by Don John of Austria in 1571 over the Turks. Each of them underwent captivity, shipwreck, and all the calamities of adverse fortune. Returning to their native country, both were admired and deserted. John III. and Sebastian, kings of Portugal, seem to have done as little to ameliorate the condition of Camoens as Philip II. and III., the sovereigns of Spain, did for Cervantes. Each of them attained to an advanced age, amidst the pressure of diseases, penury, and privations. Camoens breathed his last at Lisbon in 1579, at about sixty-two years of age, in a hospital, reproaching his countrymen, as is asserted, for their cruel neglect. Cervantes extenuated by the progress of a dropsy, which was rendered more severe by want, preserved his constitutional gaiety of disposition down to the last moments of his existence, expired at the age of sixty-nine, it may be almost said with the pen in his hand, and seemed to triumph over dissolution by the elasticity and energy of his mind. He died at Madrid in 1616, a year memorable in the annals of genius, as it likewise deprived the world of Shakespeare. The author of the "*Lusiad*" and the writer of "*Don Quixote*" were both thrown into the ground with-



out even the decencies of an ordinary funeral; nor can the spot where either of their remains are deposited be even ascertained at the present time. It is impossible to consider these facts without emotions of mingled concern and indignation. Yet Dante, Tasso, and Galileo, among the Italians, Spenser, Otway, and Chatterton, among us, appear to have experienced scarcely a milder fate.

If I could not discover the place of Camoens' interment, I at least found out the grave and tombstone of the author of "Tom Jones." Fielding, who terminated his life at Lisbon in 1754 of a complication of disorders, at little more than forty-seven years of age, lies buried in the cemetery appropriated to the English factory. I visited his grave, which was already nearly concealed by weeds and nettles. Though he did not suffer the extremity of distress under which Camoens and Cervantes terminated their lives, yet his extravagance, a quality so commonly characteristic of men distinguished by talents, embittered the evening of his days. Fielding, Richardson, and Le Sage seem to have attained the highest eminence in that seductive species of writing, unknown to antiquity, which we denominate *novels*. Crebillon, Marivaux, and Smollett only occupy the second place. Voltaire and Rousseau, however beautiful may be their compositions in this line, are rather satirical or philosophical moralists than writers of novels. "Don Quixote" is a work *sui generis*, and not amenable to ordinary rules. "Gil Blas" seems to stand alone, and will probably be read with avidity in every age and every country. The scene indeed lies in Spain and the characters are Spaniards, but the manners are universal, and true to nature equally in Madrid, in Paris, or in London. Richardson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Still when Richardson was publishing his novels, the French were even greater admirers of his genius than his own countrymen.—ED.

and Fielding are more national, and cannot be read with the same delight on the banks of the Seine or of the Tiber as on those of the Thames, though the former writer transports us to Bologna in his "Sir Charles Grandison." Fielding never attempts to carry us out of England, and his actors are all aborigines. Foreigners neither can taste his works, nor will he ever attain to the fame of Richardson beyond the limits of his own country. "Clementina" and "Clarissa" will penetrate where "Sophia Western" and "Parson Adams" never can be known or appreciated. "Joseph Andrews" and "Amelia" may be considered, in point of composition, to Fielding what "Pamela" is to Richardson.<sup>1</sup>

The late Alderman Cadell,<sup>2</sup> who was one of the most intelligent, honourable, and superior men of his profession, told me that his predecessor, Millar,<sup>3</sup> the bookseller, bought Fielding's "Amelia" of the author, giving him for the copyright £800, a great sum at that time. After making the purchase, Millar showed the manuscript to Sir Andrew Mitchell, who subsequently filled the post of British envoy at Berlin,<sup>4</sup> requesting to have his opinion of the work. Sir Andrew observed to him that it bore the indelible marks of Fielding's genius, and was a fine performance, but nevertheless far beneath "Tom Jones," finally advising him to get rid of it as soon as he could. Millar did not neglect the counsel, though he was too able a man

<sup>1</sup> "So different it is to paint mere manners or to depict general nature; but Johnson said that Fielding gave us the husk of life in his books, while Richardson picked out the kernel."—P. The criticism of to-day as to the rival novelists would be very different.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Cadell succeeded to Millar's business in 1767; elected Alderman of Walbrook Ward in 1798, died 25th October 1800.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Millar, died June 8, 1768. Johnson said of him, "Sir, I respect Millar; he has raised the price of literature."—ED.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Andrew Mitchell, K.B., Minister at Berlin and member for the Elgin Burghs.—ED.

to divulge the opinion delivered by his friend. On the contrary, at the first sale which he made to the trade, he said, "Gentlemen, I have several works to put up, for which I shall be glad if you will bid ; but as to 'Amelia,' every copy is already bespoke." This manœuvre had its effect. The booksellers were anxious to get their names put down for copies of it, and the edition, though very large, was immediately sold.

All the most interesting particulars of the earthquake of 1755 have been recounted to me by many of those persons who shared in and survived the horrors of that calamitous day, on which nearly forty thousand persons were believed to have perished.<sup>1</sup> They agreed that if it had taken place in the middle of the night, when the fires were in general extinguished, and when the darkness would have prevented the greater part of the inhabitants from quitting their houses before daybreak, not a fourth part of the lives would have been lost, nor destruction have followed. Prodigious numbers were swept off from the quays by the sudden rise of the Tagus, and the conflagration which succeeded the earthquake spread even greater devastation than did that convulsion of nature. The first shock, which came on about forty minutes after nine in the morning, seemed to be horizontal in its direction or movement, but the second shock was perpendicular or vertical, throwing up the pavement of the streets to the height of forty and fifty feet into the air. Near an hour intervened between the two concussions. The King, Queen, and royal family, by good fortune, were not at the palace in Lisbon, but at Belem, which stands near two miles lower down, on

<sup>1</sup> The total number of those who perished, including those who were burned or were afterwards crushed to death whilst digging in the ruins, was set down at more than 60,000.—ED.

the same side of the river. As the apartments which they inhabited were all built on the ground, his Majesty leaped out of the window of his chamber into the garden on first perceiving the shock;<sup>1</sup> while the three princesses, his daughters, who were either not yet risen or not dressed, followed him, wrapped in the bedclothes. Lisbon has, in all ages, been subject to the visitation and ravages of earthquakes. History commemorates several during the last six centuries, which have successively laid that capital in ruins and buried or engulfed a large part of the population. The most destructive earthquake known in modern times previous to the year 1755 happened in February 1522, soon after the decease of Emanuel, in the first year of the reign of his son, John III. The concussions of the earth then lasted during eight days, but do not appear to have produced a conflagration as ruinous or extensive as that which took place under Joseph, though more than fifteen hundred houses, besides churches, palaces, and public edifices of every kind, were destroyed. Thirty thousand persons perished in Lisbon alone, while Santarem, Almerin, and many other places were swallowed up, together with their inhabitants. John III., his queen, and the royal family, were compelled to encamp in the fields under tents, just as Joseph did in November 1755. Great as these convulsions of nature were, they may nevertheless be esteemed slight, both in their extent and in their effects, if compared with those which desolated Calabria in more recent periods, as late as the year 1783.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is said that when the King cried out in horror, "What is to be done to meet this infliction of Providence?" Pombal calmly replied, "Bury the dead, feed the living."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Messina and other towns in Italy and Sicily were overthrown by earthquake on 5th February 1783.—ED.

It is evident that the earthquake of 1755 ran in a kind of vein, principally ravaging a circle or space of about four to five miles, which was reduced to a state of desolation by the fire that followed it. The Alfama, or ancient Moorish city, situated higher up the river, as well as the suburb of Belem, extending lower down the Tagus, though both may be said to form a part of Lisbon, nearly as Wapping and Westminster constitute portions of London, received comparatively little injury. The principal edifices, and even the houses in both, remained, if not unshaken, yet undemolished. In 1772, rather more than half the space originally laid waste by the earthquake and fire had been already rebuilt. Some of the new streets might even vie in regularity and magnificence with those of any capital in Europe, forming an astonishing contrast with the filth, antiquity, and barbarism characteristic of the eastern extremity, or Alfama.

The family of Braganza has not produced, even down to the present time, any sovereign endowed with talents such as distinguished the two kings John II. and Emanuel, who reigned over the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. John IV. himself, founder of the Braganza line, though he effected the recovery of their national independence, seemed to be in no degree qualified by nature for the performance of so perilous a task. Gustavus Vasa, who expelled the tyrant Christian II. from Sweden; Henry IV., who crushed "the League" in France; William I. and William III., Princes of Orange, who successively liberated the Dutch, the former from the yoke of Spain, and the latter from the arms of Louis XIV.—all these were superior men, endowed with energies such as Providence confers on heroes. But the Duke of Braganza was an ordinary individual, whose abilities

were of the most moderate description ; even his personal courage was never proved in the field. It was the heroic spirit of his consort, which, supplying these defects, impelled him to seize the crown, which the weakness and incapacity of the Spanish Government under Philip IV. might be said to tender him. She was herself by birth a Spaniard, daughter of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, her name Louisa de Guzman. After the decease of the King, her husband, in 1656, she continued to act as Regent. John IV. left two sons, the eldest of whom, Alphonso VI., was only thirteen years of age. Labouring from his infancy under incurable maladies, or debilities of body and of mind, he appears to have been altogether unfit to exercise the duties or functions of sovereign power. While his mother held the reins of state, Alphonso's incapacity and acts of violence or of imbecility were prevented from exciting any national commotions of a serious nature ; but after the retreat and decease of that illustrious princess in 1666,<sup>1</sup> his deposition speedily followed. It was merited by his excesses and utter inaptitude for government. His own wife, a princess of the House of Nemours,<sup>2</sup> and descended from the Dukes of Savoy, to whom he had been recently married, but with whom he had never been able to consummate his nuptials, combining with Don Pedro, his younger brother, a prince of prudence, energy, and ability, arrested and deposed Alphonso. In performing this revolutionary act, they were only the agents and instruments of the nation, who unanimously demanded, sanctioned, and maintained it.

Don Pedro, thus called to the supreme authority by the voice of the Portuguese, at twenty years of

<sup>1</sup> The King forced his mother to resign the Regency in June 1662.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Mademoiselle d'Aumale, daughter of the Duc de Nemours.—ED.

age, in 1668, did not however assume the title of King. Like the present Prince Regent of the same country, he contented himself with that denomination; but he married Mary of Nemours, his brother's wife, as Henry VIII. of England had espoused Catherine of Arragon.<sup>1</sup> Down to the death of Alphonso, which took place seventeen years later, in 1683, Pedro only exercised the regency. Alphonso was first sent to the Azores, or Western Islands, placed by nature in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, where he resided for some years at Terceira in an honourable restraint; but it was afterwards judged expedient to transport him back to Portugal, and to confine him in one of the royal palaces at Cintra, a village not remote from Lisbon, situated towards the mouth of the Tagus, in a country abounding with natural beauties of every kind, which render it one of the most delicious and enchanting spots in Europe. At a more recent period, Cintra has attained historical celebrity from the convention there concluded, or rather at Torres Vedras, with the French in 1808. In the palace at the former place I visited the apartment in which Alphonso was imprisoned, and where he ended his days. Though become somewhat ruinous in 1772, it was tolerably spacious, being about twenty feet square, and proportionably lofty. He passed eleven years as a captive in that chamber. Towards the latter part of his life, his understanding, naturally very weak, became wholly alienated. He grew furious to such a degree, that it was found necessary to confine him by an iron rail, which surrounded his bed, and allowed him

<sup>1</sup> The Queen despatched a confidential messenger to her uncle, the Cardinal Vendôme, the Papal Legate, for a brief to authorise a second marriage on the ground of the impotence of the King (no proof of which, however was adduced), who arranged the matter for her, and subsequently obtained the Pope's consent.—ED.

only a space of about fourteen to sixteen feet for exercise. The bricks of which the floor was composed were worn away in this track by the constant action of his feet. His death, however, as far as we can assert, or are warranted to conjecture, was not accelerated by any act of treachery or violence. It is an extraordinary circumstance, that Alphonso terminated his unfortunate life on the 12th of December 1683, and that his former wife, Mary of Nemours, who was married to his younger brother, Don Pedro, died on the 17th of the same month and year, leaving no issue by that prince.<sup>1</sup>

Pedro II., who continued to reign down to the commencement of the last century, in 1706, was unquestionably the most able of the sovereigns that have governed Portugal from 1640 to the present time. John V., his son and successor,<sup>2</sup> seems to have been a man of moderate intellectual endowments, fond of show, but destitute of taste; and during the latter years of his life, when the powers of his mind had been enfeebled in consequence of an apoplectic stroke, enslaved by bigotry. He expended 45,000,000 crusadoes, or nearly £4,000,000 sterling, in the erection of a palace at Maffra, about five leagues north of Cintra, and not far removed from the shore of the Atlantic. It formed a monument of royal prodigality blended with superstition. Who can believe that in the last century any prince would construct a residence in imitation or emulation of the Escorial of Philip II. of Spain? John V. did not, indeed, like Philip, build the palace of Maffra in the form of a gridiron, but he united in one edifice, precisely as that King had done, a palace, a church, and a convent.

<sup>1</sup> She left a daughter, the Infanta Isabel.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Joam V. was born in 1688; he was the son of Pedro by his second wife, a princess of Bavaria.—ED.



The church occupied the centre of the building, contiguous to it being placed the cloisters, together with the cells or apartments of the monks. Three hundred Franciscan friars, a monastic order distinguished for the disgusting filth of their dress and appearance, were there stationed. They had even a hospital in the central part of the edifice for the diseased and infirm members of the fraternity. One of the first acts of Joseph's reign was to dislodge them; and when I visited Maffra, they had been replaced by secular priests, diminished in number. The palace, dismantled, forsaken, and forming altogether an appendage to the convent, extended in two wings on either side and behind the church, but without gardens or pleasure grounds of any kind. Such was Maffra, the Versailles of Portugal, erected, like that palace, in a situation little favoured by Nature! John V. expended his revenues more beneficially in constructing the aqueduct of Alcantra, scarcely a mile out of Lisbon,<sup>1</sup> which principally supplies the capital with water. In solidity and grandeur, it is a work worthy of ancient Rome; crossing a deep valley or ravine, from one mountain to another, on arches, the central arch of which range is 300 feet in height and 90 in breadth. The earthquake of 1755 spared this monument of national utility, which received little injury from the shock.

The reign of Joseph may be properly denominated the administration of the Conde de Oeyras, created afterwards Marquis de Pombal. This minister's name was Sebastian Joseph Carvalho. His birth, noble, but not illustrious, would never have opened him a way to power, though aided by extraordinary talents, if court favour had not sustained and propelled them. Maria Anna of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Leopold I., and queen

<sup>1</sup> The Lisbon aqueduct was completed in 1738.—ED.

of John V., recommended him to her son Joseph, who, on his accession to the throne in 1750, named Carvalho Secretary for Foreign Affairs. His own abilities achieved the rest. On him Joseph seemed to have devolved the exclusive and absolute government of the state; nor was he unworthy of that selection. At the time that I saw him he had attained his seventy-third year; but age appeared neither to have diminished the vigour, freshness, or activity of his faculties. In his person he was very tall and slender; his face long, pale, meagre, and full of intelligence. He was so unpopular, and so many attempts had been made to assassinate him, that he never went out without guards. Even in the streets of Lisbon his carriage was always accompanied or surrounded by a detachment of cavalry with their swords drawn for his protection. He was, indeed, not less odious to the nobility and clergy than to the people—perhaps even more so—one of the great objects of his policy during more than twenty years having been to reduce the aristocratic and ecclesiastical privileges of every kind to a strict dependence on the crown and government.

In 1772 the state prisons were crowded with unfortunate victims. The tower of Belem, the fort of the Bougie, situate at the mouth of the Tagus, and the Castle of St. Julien, placed at the northern entrance of that river, were all full of prisoners, among whom a great proportion had been Jesuits, arrested either in 1758 or in 1763 by orders of the first Minister. The subterranean casemates of the Castle of St. Julien contained above a hundred individuals, who could be clearly discerned by persons walking on the ramparts of the fortress, through the iron gratings which admitted some light to those gloomy abodes. I have myself

beheld many of them, at the depth of fifty or sixty feet below me, pacing to and fro, most of whom being Jesuits, were habited in the dress of the Order. They excited great commiseration. The famous Gabriel Malagrida,<sup>1</sup> an Italian Jesuit, who was accused of having, as confessor to the Marchioness of Tavora, known and encouraged her to make the attempt upon Joseph's life, after being long imprisoned in that fortress, was strangled, and his body subsequently reduced to ashes at the stake, in 1761.<sup>2</sup> He appears to have been rather a visionary and an imbecile fanatic than a man of dangerous parts. His public execution, when near seventy-five years of age, must be considered as a cruel and odious act, which reflects disgrace on Joseph and on his Minister. Malagrida's name has become proverbial among us to express duplicity, and has been applied—perhaps unjustly—to one of our own greatest modern statesmen by his political opponents.<sup>3</sup> Many other persons of all ranks, either known or believed to have been implicated in the Duke d'Aveiro's conspiracy, remained in 1772 shut up in the various state prisons of Portugal. Most or all of these unhappy sufferers who survived have, I believe, been since liberated in 1777, on the accession of the present Queen Maria.

In extenuation of the first Minister and of Joseph it must, however, be admitted that the national character of the Portuguese, at once bigoted, sanguinary, and vindictive, demanded a severe govern-

<sup>1</sup> An Italian Jesuit, who had been sent as a missionary to Portugal.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Malagrida was ostensibly executed for his heresies; but Mr. Hay, the British Minister, was told by Pombal that if he had not suffered for heresy he would have undergone another trial for high treason.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> The celebrated Earl of Shelburne. This calls to mind Goldsmith's well-known blundering speech: "I wonder why people call your Lordship Malagrida; for Malagrida was a good sort of man."—ED.

ment. They were neither to be reformed, enlightened, nor coerced by gentle and palliative remedies. At the decease of John V., the streets of Lisbon, even in the most frequented quarters, exhibited perpetual scenes of violence and of murder during the night. Dead bodies, stabbed and covered with wounds, were left exposed in the squares and public places. But before 1772 the police, introduced and rigorously enforced by the Marquis de Pombal, had almost extinguished these enormities, and had rendered the capital nearly as secure as London. During my residence there, of many weeks, such was the vigilance of the patrol, that only one assassination was committed; and I have returned home alone on foot at very late hours without danger or apprehension. Nor were the cares of the first Minister limited to the mere protection of the metropolis. Its re-edification, salubrity, and improvement in every sense occupied him. Lisbon might truly be said to rise from its ashes, as ancient Rome did under Augustus, renewed and beautified. The education of the young nobility formed likewise a distinguished object of his regard. A college, founded solely for their benefit at an immense expense, was already nearly completed. I visited it, as I did the manufactures of silk, of lace, of ivory, and many others, carried on under his auspices. All these bespoke a great and elevated mind, intent on ameliorating the order of things, and animated by very salutary or enlarged views. But the greater number of the Marquis de Pombal's institutions, edifices, and fabrics demanded time and funds for their entire accomplishment. The general detestation in which he was held impeded their progress; nor was it doubted that as soon as the present Queen, then Princess of Brazil, should succeed to the throne, her superstition or

her prejudices would overturn all that Joseph and his Minister had done in order to introduce improvements or reforms into Portugal. The event fully justified this prediction.

Joseph's reign, which had been marked by earthquakes, conspiracies, and war, was regarded by the Portuguese nation, not without some apparent reason, as a most calamitous period. Yet if we compare the misfortunes of that time with those which have succeeded, when the sovereign, the royal family, and the principal nobility have been compelled to abandon their native country in order to seek an asylum in South America, while the capital and the provinces have been occupied, overrun, and plundered by a revolutionary enemy of the most rapacious description,—how tolerable were the evils endured under Joseph when compared with those to which Portugal has been subjected under his daughter! They may be said to have equalled, if they did not exceed, between 1807 and 1810, the degradation and subversion which followed the death of Sebastian in the sixteenth century, when Philip II. rendered himself master of the kingdom. Having mentioned Sebastian, I shall say a few words on the history of that unfortunate prince. It is well known that he perished or disappeared in the famous battle of Arzila, on the coast of Barbary, fought on the 4th of August 1578. I have seen in the royal palace at Cintra a little open court or balcony, adjoining one of the rooms of state, in which was constructed a stone chair or seat, coated with a sort of coarse porcelain, a bench of the same materials extending on each side. In that chair, while his Ministers sat round him, Sebastian, as constant tradition asserts, held the memorable council in which the enterprise against Morocco was resolved on, contrary to the advice and opinions

of his more prudent counsellors. That he was no more seen after the day of the battle of Arzila by the Portuguese is certain; but it is not absolutely ascertained beyond all doubt that he perished there. His body was never found, or at least was never identified; and I have conversed with very judicious men at Lisbon who inclined to believe that the individual who appeared at Venice in 1598 asserting himself to be Sebastian was really that prince.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph had one sister, named Barbara, who was married at seventeen years of age to Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias, youngest of the sons of Philip V., King of Spain, by his first queen, and who afterwards succeeded him on the Spanish throne. This princess, who seems to have been entirely under the dominion of superstition and of music, before she quitted Lisbon in order to become the wife of Ferdinand, in 1729, having repaired to the Church of the "Madre de Dios," or Mother of God, situate on the banks of the Tagus, in the suburbs, there made a solemn offer to the Virgin of the rich dress, laces, and valuable jewels which she had worn at the ceremony of her espousals. I was induced to visit the church for the purpose of viewing this magnificent sacrifice or renunciation of female ornament. The image was habited from head to foot in the finest lace, the stomacher, necklace, and earrings being altogether composed of brilliants. Lady Wortley Montagu remarks in one of her letters, written from some part of Germany<sup>2</sup>—I believe

<sup>1</sup> Several books have been written upon the false Don Sebastians. A chapter in John H. Ingram's "Claimants to Royalty," 1882, is devoted to the subject; and the number of the "Edinburgh Review" for July 1882 contains an article on "Don Sebastian and his Personators" (vol. clvi. p. 1). A French writer once asked, "What can be looked for from a people one-half of whom awaits the Messiah, and the other half Don Sebastian?"—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writing to Mrs. Thistlethwayte from Ratisbon, August 30, [O.S.] 1716, says: "I have been to see the

from Cologne—that in her time, as early as 1717 or 1718, the knavery of the priests had already removed in most or in many of the Catholic churches the precious stones which devotees had presented to the saints, substituting paste or other imitations in their place. This assertion may have been well founded relative to Germany, but was not true in Portugal at a much later period. I viewed these diamonds, by permission of the priests, very closely, through the medium of a glass case, in which the Virgin herself was enclosed, and I have not the slightest doubt that they were the identical jewels presented by the Princess on the above-mentioned occasion.<sup>1</sup> At the feet of His mother, secured within the same case, lay a waxen figure of the infant Jesus, wrapt in similar attire, and reposing in a cradle of solid silver. How long these costly articles of dress may have remained unremoved in the Church of the “Madre de Dios” since I saw them I cannot pretend to say; but we may presume that the Prince Regent, when he embarked for Rio Janeiro, did not leave them behind, for the Duchess of Abrantés<sup>2</sup> or the revolutionary rapacity of the French generals, who would no more have spared

churches here, and the permission of touching the relics, which was never suffered in places where I was not known. I had by this privilege the opportunity of making an observation, which I don't doubt might have been made in all the other churches, that the emeralds and rubies that they strew round their relics and images are most of them false, though they tell you that many of the crosses and Madonnas set round with these stones have been the gifts of the emperors and other great princes; and I don't doubt but they were at first jewels of value, but the good fathers have found it convenient to apply them to other uses, and the people are just as well satisfied with bits of glass.”—*Letters and Works*, vol. i. p. 234.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> It is somewhat rash to express so decided an opinion as to the genuineness of jewels only seen through a glass. Few lapidaries would care to commit themselves on a point of this kind unless they had the stone in their hand.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Laurette Junot, wife of Marshal Andoche Junot, Duc d'Abrantés, born in 1784, and died in 1838. She wrote several volumes of memoirs.—ED.

them than the elder Dionysius respected the golden beard of Esculapius or the mantle of Jupiter.

The Princess Barbara, who became Queen of Spain in 1720, constituted the supreme felicity of Ferdinand VI., her husband, with whom she lived twenty-nine years in a state of such conjugal union as is rarely to be found in human life, and still more rarely on the throne. They nevertheless remained without issue. Like his Queen, Ferdinand nourished a decided passion, or rather rage, for music; and it is well known that the celebrated Farinelli<sup>1</sup> enjoyed under his reign, as he had previously done under that of Philip V., an almost unbounded ascendant over both the King and Queen. Such was Farinelli's prodigious influence, that he may be said to have shared the political power of the state with Enseñada,<sup>2</sup> the first Minister of Ferdinand, a prince who, though he reigned in our own times, is hardly known or remembered beyond the limits of Spain. His talents were very confined, but his intentions were upright. Notwithstanding the obligations of the "family compact," he wisely refused, on the commencement of the war between Great Britain and France in 1756, to join the latter power or to sacrifice, as his successor Charles III. did in 1761, the interests of his people to the ties of consanguinity existing between him and Louis XV. Until the period of his decease, which took place in 1759,

<sup>1</sup> Carlo Broschi detto Farinelli, born January 14, 1705. He made his first journey to England in 1734. When he went to Spain, Philip V. was suffering from melancholy depression, and his singing cured the King. For ten years he sang four songs to the King every night, and during this time he repeated about 3600 times the same things, and never anything else. Ferdinand suffered from the same infirmity as his father, and was also cured by Farinelli, who enjoyed the position of first favourite. When Charles III. came to the throne, he received orders to quit the kingdom, probably because the King was about to sign the family pact with France and Naples, to which the singer had always been opposed. He died July 15, 1782.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Zeno Silva, Marquis de la Enseñada, born 1690, died 1772.—ED.



Ferdinand maintained a strict neutrality. His death was unquestionably produced by grief for the loss of his queen, who had been carried off in the preceding year. From that time Ferdinand became a prey to the most inveterate melancholy, which not only enfeebled, but in some measure alienated his mind. Abandoning himself to despair, he declined all society; refused to change his linen, or to take any remedies during some weeks before he expired, and ultimately died the victim of conjugal affection. I believe it would be difficult to find another example of such a death among the crowned heads of Europe. In consequence of this event, his half-brother, Charles, who then reigned at Naples, a son of Philip V. by his second wife, the *Parmesana*, as she was denominated, ascended the throne of Spain.

I passed a great part of the years 1775 and 1776 in France, not long after the decease of Louis XV., a sovereign whose character and actions always appeared to me to be depreciated and undervalued by the French, nearly in the same proportion that they have elevated those of Louis XIV. above their just standard. Like his predecessor, he succeeded to the crown while in childhood, but he had not the same advantages as Louis XIV. enjoyed, whose mother, Anne of Austria, watched with maternal solicitude over his preservation. Louis XV., who at five years of age survived both his parents, was left, during the regency of Philip, Duke of Orleans,<sup>1</sup> principally to the care of Fleury, Bishop of Frejus,<sup>2</sup> who obtained over his pupil an early and almost an unbounded ascendant. The Regency lasted above eight years,

<sup>1</sup> Philippe, Duc d'Orleans, born in 1674, made Regent of the kingdom during the minority of Louis XIII. He died in 1723.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> André Hercule, Cardinal de Fleury, born in 1623, promoted to the see of Frejus by Louis XIV. in 1698, made Cardinal and Prime Minister in 1726, and died in 1743.—ED.

and during no period of time since the abdication of James II. in 1689, down to the present day, have France and England been so closely united by political ties. George I. and the Regent Duke both dreaded a pretender: one, in the son of James; the other, in Philip V., King of Spain. Impelled by this apprehension, the two princes equally made the policy and interests of their respective countries subordinate to their personal objects of acquisition or ambition. Philip, Duke of Orleans, whom Pope denominates "a godless regent,"<sup>1</sup> was undoubtedly one of the most immoral and profligate men whom we have beheld in modern ages. The orgies of the "Palais Royal" probably exceeded in depravity as well as in enormity everything of the same kind ever acted, even in France. The incestuous fables of antiquity, and the unnatural amours of Cinyras and Myrrha, which we read with horror in Ovid, the revolting stories related of Alexander VI. and his daughter Lucretia Borgia, were universally believed to have been realised in the persons of the Duchess de Berri and the Abbess de Chelles with their own father. But notwithstanding the disgust excited by such scenes of infamous turpitude, we must acknowledge that the Regent likewise displayed some of the greatest endowments and talents, fitted both for the cabinet and for the field. His descendant, who performed so detestable a part in the late French revolution,<sup>2</sup> only resembled him in his vices. He inherited neither the distinguished personal courage, nor the ardor for knowledge, nor the military skill, nor the aptitude for public business, nor the elevated mind of the Regent, who, if he

<sup>1</sup> "A godless regent tremble at a star."—*Moral Essays*, i. 90.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Philippe Louis Joseph, Duc d'Orleans, great-grandson of the Regent, known as Philippe Egalité, was born in 1747, guillotined in 1793.—ED.

had not been restrained by some considerations of goodness or some emotions of affection, might easily have acted by Louis XV. as we suppose that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, did by Edward V., or as we know that the late Duke of Orleans acted by Louis XVI. and his queen. To the Regent, whose life was terminated before the end of the year 1723 in the arms of the Duchess de Valori, abbreviated by his excesses, succeeded the short and feeble Ministry of the Duke of Bourbon,<sup>1</sup> comprising scarcely three years; but which period of time produced one event peculiarly interesting to the young King and to France; I mean his marriage.

There is no instance in the last or present century of any female attaining so great an elevation as that of Madmoiselle de Leczinska to the throne of France, for we cannot justly reckon the second marriage of the Czar Peter with Catherine the Livonian peasant as an exception. Muscovy could scarcely then be considered as forming a portion of the European system, nor were his sovereigns altogether subjected to our usages. That the daughter of an expatriated Polish nobleman or Palatine,<sup>2</sup> whom Charles XII. of Sweden had forced upon the Poles as their king during a few years, but who was in fact only a needy, exiled adventurer, driven by necessity to take shelter in an obscure provincial town of Alsace, and destitute

<sup>1</sup> Henri Louis Condé, Duc de Bourbon, died in 1740.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Stanislaus Leczinski was born in 1677, and elevated to the dignity of a Palatine of Posen at the early age of twenty-three. He was elected King of Poland by the favour of Charles XII., and crowned with his wife in 1705. After the battle of Pultowa he retired to the kingdom of Sweden for a time. In 1733 he was elected for a second time King of Poland, but had to retire in favour of Augustus III. of Saxony. By the treaty of Vienna (1736) between Austria and France, Stanislaus was invested for life with the possession of the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar, retaining the *title* of King of Poland.—ED.

of territories, or almost of support—that a princess, if such she might indeed be properly denominated, who could hardly be thought a suitable match for one of the petty sovereigns on the banks of the Elbe or the Rhine, should have been selected for the consort of a King of France, may assuredly be considered as one of the most singular caprices of fortune. Its singularity becomes augmented when we reflect that the young monarch was already not only betrothed to the daughter of Philip V., his uncle, King of Spain, but that the princess destined to share his throne and bed had long resided in France, the nuptials being only delayed till the two parties should attain a proper age. Yet, in defiance of this impediment, did the Duke of Bourbon venture to send back Philip's daughter to Madrid, and I met her at Lisbon, nearly a century afterwards, become Queen of Portugal, transported from the banks of the Seine to those of the Tagus ; while a native of Poland, brought up in obscurity, and hardly accounted among the female candidates for a European crown, supplied her place. The motive assigned for so extraordinary a proceeding on the part of the Duke of Bourbon was his apprehension that the young King, whose delicate constitution seemed scarcely to promise his attaining to manhood, should die without issue.

I have been assured by persons conversant in the secret history of the early part of Louis XV.'s reign, that when the Duke of Bourbon determined on dissolving the unconsummated marriage between the young King and Philip's daughter, he found himself under the greatest embarrassment whom to substitute in her room. He had a sister, Mademoiselle de Sens, born in 1705, whose age and personal accomplishments rendered her a fit bride for Louis. She then resided at the

Abbey of Fontevraud in Anjou, under the protection of the Abbess, and it was natural for the Duke to desire to raise her to the throne. But he was himself enslaved to the celebrated Marchioness de Prie, who wished to have the merit of naming the future Queen, in whose household and about whose person she aspired to occupy a distinguished situation. On the other hand, they both equally dreaded a wife whose charms, talents, or ambition might impel her to assume an empire over the young sovereign's mind. Louis, then only entering on his sixteenth year, brought up in great seclusion, scarcely initiated in public business, and though not destitute of talents, yet indolent, of very reserved habits, modest, and diffident of himself, would not improbably, like his uncle, Philip V., be governed by a queen of energy or spirit. Before the choice fell therefore on the Duke of Bourbon's sister, it behoved the Marchioness to ascertain whether, if selected for so great an elevation, she would probably manifest ductility of character, gratitude, and attachment towards the person who principally raised her to that eminence. Madame de Prie had before her eyes the fatal example of the Princess des Ursins, only about eleven years antecedent, who, in consequence of her error relative to the character of Elizabeth Farnese, selected by herself for the second wife of Philip V., King of Spain, had been in an instant precipitated from power, arrested, disgraced, and banished. Admonished by so recent an instance of the instability of royal favour, and in order to obtain satisfaction on a point so important, Madame de Prie determined to procure an interview with Mademoiselle de Sens, to whom she was unknown by person, though not by reputation. As-

suming, therefore, a fictitious name, she repaired to Fontevraud, and having been presented to her, found means to turn the conversation on the Marchioness de Prie. Unconscious that the stranger to whom she addressed her discourse was the Marchioness herself, the Princess gave full scope to her antipathy towards a woman whom she considered as exercising a pernicious influence over her brother's mind. This disclosure of her sentiments at once stopped the further prosecution of Madame de Prie's plan for placing her on the French throne, and compelled her to turn her views to another quarter.

The Duke of Bourbon, not discouraged by the obstacle which difference of religion imposed on him, next embraced the extraordinary measure of demanding for his royal master the hand of an English princess, and he named as the object of his selection the eldest grand-daughter of George I., Anne, who afterwards married William IV., Prince of Orange. This event took place in 1725. However strong might be the objection arising from her profession of the Protestant faith, which she must necessarily have renounced in order to ascend the throne of France, yet the offer was alluring; and Henrietta, sister of Charles II., had married Philip, Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV., after Charles's restoration. But George I., though gratified by the proposition of seeing his female descendant wear the French crown, yet was too wise to accept it. His Ministers well knew that such an alliance, however splendid in itself, or whatever political advantages it might seem to present, would irritate and disgust all the adherents of the Hanoverian succession. Thus foiled in two attempts to dispose of Louis XV.'s hand, and firmly resolved on effecting his

marriage without delay, Madame de Prie cast her eyes on Maria Leczinska, the daughter of Stanislaus, who was living with her father at Weissembourg in Alsace, a town situate not far from the Rhine, on the frontier of Germany, though in the dominions of France, where the titular King of Poland resided in as much obscurity as Charles II. lived in the preceding century at Cologne during the Protectorate of Cromwell. So little expectation did he entertain of matching his daughter with a crowned head, that he had already lent a favourable ear to the proposals of a private nobleman, a subject of France, the Count d'Estrées, who offered her marriage. Stanislaus accepted the offer, but desired to delay its accomplishment till he could procure, if possible, the honours of a duchess at the Court of Versailles for Mademoiselle de Leczinska.

With that view he actually made applications to obtain a brevet of duke for the Count d'Estrées, his destined son-in-law, though without success, fortune reserving for her the first diadem in Europe. Her principal recommendation consisted in her want of personal attractions, the humility of her condition, and the obligation to gratitude which she must naturally feel for the authors of so wonderful an elevation. In fact, nature had neither bestowed on her beauty, elegance of manners, nor intellectual endowments of any kind. Even youth she could scarcely be said comparatively to possess, as she was already twenty-three years of age, while her destined husband was only sixteen. We know not which to admire most, the singularity of such a choice, or the passive apathy displayed by Louis while his Minister and Madame de Prie thus disposed of his person. Maria Leczinska brought him nothing as a portion on the day of her nuptials ex-

cept modesty, virtue, and goodness of heart. Yet the young King during eleven or twelve years after his marriage exhibited a pattern of conjugal fidelity which stands strongly contrasted with Louis XIV.'s dissolute amours at the same period of life, though Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip IV., could boast of superior personal charms to the Polish princess. The Countess de Soissons, the Duchess de la Valiere, and Madame de Montespan disputed for the possession of Louis XIV.'s youth. It was not till Louis XV. had passed his thirtieth year that, after becoming successively enamoured of the Duchesse de Chateauroux and her two sisters, he sank first into the arms of the Marchioness de Pompadour, and in his old age resigned himself to the disgraceful chains of the Countess du Barry.

The Duke de Bourbon's and Madame de Prie's period of power proved nevertheless of short duration. He was banished in 1726 to Chantilly, and at that point of time commences Cardinal Fleury's administration. He retained his ministerial supremacy nearly as long as Richelieu had done, namely, about seventeen years; and though Fleury was very far inferior in strength of character, resources, and energy to his great predecessor, yet may France justly feel for him equal gratitude. Pacific, economical, unostentatious, and mild, he seemed made to heal the wounds inflicted on their country by the ambition of Louis XIV. and the excesses of the Regent. If Richelieu, as we are assured from contemporary authority, ventured to raise his eyes to Anne of Austria, and to make her propositions of a libertine nature, it is equally a fact, however incredible it may appear, that Fleury, then about seventy years of age, carried his presumption still farther with respect to Maria Leczinska. That



princess, conscious nevertheless of the ascendant which the Cardinal had obtained over her husband, possessed too much prudence to communicate to him, in the first instance, the subject of her complaint. She wisely preferred making a confidant of her father. To Stanislaus she therefore revealed the temerity of the aged Minister, and besought him to give her his advice for her conduct, particularly on the propriety of her acquainting Louis with the circumstance. Stanislaus exhorted her, in reply, to bury the secret in her own bosom, observing, at the same time, that sovereign princesses are placed on such an eminence as almost to render it impossible for any disrespectful propositions to be made them, unless they encourage to a certain degree such advances. The Queen was discreet enough to adopt this judicious and paternal counsel. If I had not received the anecdote here related from a person, whose intimacy with the individuals composing the Court of France at that time, joined to his rank and high character, left no doubt of its authenticity, I should not venture to recount the fact.

To Louis XV. France stands indebted for the acquisition of Lorraine, a territory surpassing in real importance any augmentation of the French dominions made by arms within the last three centuries. Henry II. had conquered Metz, Toul, and Verdun from the German Empire, besides re-annexing Calais, so long held by the English princes. The counties of Bugey and Bresse, covering the borders on the side of Savoy, were gained by Henry IV. His son, Louis XIII., or more properly to speak, the Cardinal de Richelieu, added Rousillon and Cerdagne, situate at one extremity of the kingdom, towards Catalonia; while in another quarter he reduced Artois and Alsace to the French obedience. Lastly, Louis XIV., in

the course of his long, ambitious, and sanguinary career, exceeding in duration seventy years, not only enlarged or strengthened his frontier along the Rhine, but augmented his territories by the addition of Franche Comté and of a vast portion of Flanders. Yet may we justly doubt whether any of these acquisitions conferred such strength and security as the possession of Lorraine. When we reflect on the beauty and extent of that fine country, stretching into the midst of France, contiguous on the east to Germany, while on the west its limits approached Paris itself, we must own that the French seem ungrateful to the memory of a prince who by his arms and negotiations succeeded in retaining so valuable a province. It affixed the seal to every preceding effort made for the security, greatness, and protection of France. Nor can we too severely censure the inert or parsimonious and narrow policy of Walpole in permitting Cardinal Fleury to illustrate his administration by such an act. France did not indeed instantly take possession in her own name of the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar. Fortune, after raising Maria Leczinska to the throne of France, conferred on her father, in recompense for his ideal Polish crown, the fertile province of Lorraine, the enjoyment and revenues of which were secured to him for his life. Such a substitution was in fact exchanging the armour of Diomed for that of Glaucus, a barren sceptre for one of gold.

Stanislaus, when this event took place in 1736, was already nearly sixty, and he remained during thirty years Duke of Lorraine. His administration, mild, beneficent, and liberal, rendered him beloved by his new subjects. He embellished Nancy, the capital, but he held his court and residence principally at Luneville, where he expired in consequence of a singular accident, having been burnt to death.

Charles, King of Navarre, surnamed the Bad, perished nearly in the same manner, about four centuries earlier, at Pampeluna. The late Lady Mary Churchill, Sir Robert Walpole's daughter, who then resided with her husband at Luneville, has more than once recounted to me all the particulars of Stanislaus's end. Mr. Churchill<sup>1</sup> and Lady Mary,<sup>2</sup> who lived in habits of intimacy with him, dined at his villa of Bon Secours, a short distance from Luneville, on the day preceding the catastrophe which terminated his life. She assured me that though extremely bent with age and infirmities, being then near eighty-nine years old, he retained both his faculties and his good-humour. Naturally gallant, he had a nominal mistress, the Marchioness de Boufflers, who occupied a part of the palace of Luneville, and to whom he was much attached, though he manifested neither jealousy nor dissatisfaction at her preference of a younger rival. His own Chancellor had contrived to insinuate himself into Madame de Boufflers' favour, a fact of which the King was not ignorant. Taking leave of her one evening when retiring to his apartment, after embracing her, "*Mon Chancelier*," added he, "*vous dira le reste*;" a jocose allusion to the words with which, as is well known, the French

<sup>1</sup> "Are you Mr. Churchill, the poet?" asked an oblivious French gentleman. "No, sir." "Ah! so much the worse for you!" was the reply.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Walpole, daughter of Sir Robert Walpole by his second wife, Mary Skerrett, but born before their marriage. When Sir Robert was created an earl, she had the rank of an earl's daughter conferred on her. She married Charles Churchill, the natural son of General Charles Churchill by Mrs. Oldfield. Walpole says in a letter to the Countess of Ossory:—"The Churchills were delighted with Nancy; but then I think King Stanislaus was living. Now I conclude both Nancy and Luneville are fallen into the state of other little capitals that have become appendices to greater—are grown poorer and keep up a melancholy kind of pride in lamenting the better days they remember."—*Letters*, vol. viii. p. 411.—ED.

sovereigns, when holding a *bed of justice*, always finish their harangues.<sup>1</sup> Stanislaus, during the last years of his life, withdrew to his chamber every night at nine o'clock, and his departure constituted the signal for commencing *faro*. All the persons of both sexes composing his court and household then sat down to that infatuating game, which was continued without intermission to a late hour. But a circumstance seemingly incredible is, that the rage for it became such as to attract by degrees to the table all the domestics of the palace, down to the very turnspits or scullions, who crowded round, staked their *écus*<sup>2</sup> on the cards over the heads of the company. Such a fact sufficiently proves the relaxation of manners which prevailed in the court of Lorraine under Stanislaus.

His death, as Lady Mary Churchill related it to me, took place in February 1766, in the following manner. The old King, who, like the Poles and Germans, was much addicted to smoking tobacco, usually finished several pipes every day. Being alone in an undress, while endeavouring to knock out the ashes from his pipe, he set fire to his gown; and his *valet de chambre*, who alone exercised the privilege of entering his apartment, had unfortunately just gone into the town of Luneville. His cries were not immediately heard; but when they reached the officer stationed on guard in the outward room, he flew to the King's assistance, and having contrived to throw him down on the floor, the flames were speedily extinguished. He might even have survived and recovered the accident, if it had not been accompanied with a singular circum-

<sup>1</sup> The Marquise de Boufflers was daughter of the Prince de Craon, who is frequently mentioned in Walpole's letters. She must not be confused with the Comtesse de Boufflers whose visit to Dr. Johnson is commemorated by Boswell.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> An *écu* (a crown) was a French coin worth 2s. 6d.—ED.

stance. Stanislaus, who during the last years of his life,

—cum numina nobis  
Mors instans majora facit,

had become devout, as a penance for his transgressions constantly wore under his shirt next to his flesh a "*reliquaire*," or girdle, made of silver, having points on the inside, from space to space. These points becoming heated, and being pressed into his body while in the act of extinguishing the fire, caused a number of wounds or sores, the discharge from which, at his advanced age, proved too severe for his enfeebled constitution. Conscious that his end approached, and only a short time before it took place, he expressed a warm desire to see Mr. Churchill and Lady Mary. They having immediately waited on him, the King received them with great complacency, and with perfect self-possession; took leave of them most cheerfully; remarked the singularity of his fortune throughout life; and added, alluding to the strange manner of his death, "*Il ne manquoit qu'une parcelle mort, pour un aventurier comme moi.*" He soon afterwards expired, retaining his senses and understanding almost to the last moments of his existence.<sup>1</sup>

If Louis XV. by the peace of 1736 acquired Lorraine for France, he covered his country with military glory during the war that commenced in 1741, on the death of the Emperor Charles VI. Fleury was no more, he and Walpole having finished their political careers nearly about the same time. Neither ancient nor modern history can present any instance of a first Minister commencing

<sup>1</sup> Horace Walpole gives an account of Stanislaus in one of his letters to Mann. He writes:—"This court is plunged into another deep mourning for the death of old Stanislaus, who fell into the fire; it caught his night-gown, and burnt him terribly before he got assistance."—*Walpole's Letters*, iv. 481.—ED.

his administration, like Fleury, at seventy-three years of age, and retaining his power till he was ninety. Such a fact must indeed be considered as an exception to the general laws of nature, moral as well as physical. Cardinal Ximenes in Spain, who approached the nearest to him, died at eighty-one; and I believe the Count de Maurepas, under Louis XVI., almost attained to a similar age. In 1744, the year after Fleury's decease, Louis was seized at Metz with a fever which nearly proved fatal. If he had expired at that time, as was expected to happen every moment during several successive days, his memory would have been embalmed in the hearts of his subjects and of mankind. Never were more ardent or more universal vows offered up to Heaven by the Roman people for the recovery of Germanicus or for the preservation of Titus than were made by the French nation for his restoration to health. They were unfortunately heard, and we exclaim with Juvenal—

“Provida Pompeio dederat Campania febres  
Optandas: sed multæ urbes, et publica vota  
Vicerunt.”

Though Louis, like Pompey, survived these testimonies of popular favour, yet, during the whole course of that war, down to its termination in 1748, he continued to deserve and to retain the affections of the nation. Four brilliant and triumphant campaigns, in one of which he was personally present, rendered him master of all the Austrian Netherlands. The military trophies of Marlborough, erected forty years earlier on the same plains, were lost at Fontenoy, at Raucoux, and at Lafeldt. Greater by his moderation than even by his conquests, Louis gave peace to Europe at Aix-la-Chapelle, when Holland lay open to his attack, and

when Mr. Pelham, who was then at the head of the councils of England, possessed neither pecuniary nor military resources for maintaining the contest.<sup>1</sup> Louis XIV. may undoubtedly have inspired more terror at certain periods of his reign, but never excited more respect than did his successor at the conclusion of the great war which took place on the accession of Maria Theresa.

It forms a curious subject of reflection that the armies of France, during the splendid portion of Louis XV.'s reign, when he thus overran the Low Countries, were commanded by foreigners. To Condé, Turenne, and Luxembourg had succeeded Catinat, Vendôme, Boufflers, and Villars; but these last generals left no successors. In 1734, Villars, at near fourscore, remained the sole survivor of those illustrious commanders, who, from Rocroi down to Denain, from 1643 to 1712, had carried victory over so many countries of Europe. An Englishman, the Duke of Berwick,<sup>2</sup> natural son of James II. by Arabella Churchill, sister of the great Duke of Marlborough, was placed at the head of the French forces on the Rhine in 1734; while a German and a Dane subjected Flanders to Louis XV. between 1743 and 1748. Marshal Saxe,<sup>3</sup> the former of these generals, attained a military reputation hardly exceeded by any individual in modern times. Lowendahl, the other, descended from the

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. Henry Pelham, second son of Thomas, the first Lord Pelham, Prime Minister from 1743 till his death. He had previously held the office of Secretary at War under Walpole, and Paymaster of the Forces in the Wilmington Administration. He married Lady Catherine Manners, daughter of John, second Duke of Rutland, in 1726, and died March 6, 1764. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, signed on 7th October 1748, was highly unpopular in England.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> James Fitzjames, Duke of Berwick, born at Moulins in 1670, killed in 1734 at the siege of Philipsburg.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Maurice, Count de Saxe, born at Dresden in 1696, created a Marshal of France in 1744, and died in 1750.—ED.

kings of Denmark, was immortalised by the capture of Bergen-op-Zoom, then regarded as the most impregnable fortress on the Continent. Both survived the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle only a few years. I have been in the apartment of the Palace of Chambord, near Blois, where Marshal Saxe, a German general in the French service, expired in November 1750, extenuated by pleasures which had enervated his Herculean frame, and produced his premature end at fifty-four years of age. The natural son of Augustus II., King of Poland, and Elector of Saxony, by the beautiful Countess of Königsmark,<sup>1</sup> he inherited from his father an extraordinary degree of bodily strength; but, like Milo in antiquity,

“Viribus ille

Confisus periit, admirandisque lacertis.”

At Chambord, where he maintained a magnificent establishment during the two last years of his life, he constantly entertained a company of comedians, as if he had been a sovereign prince. Mademoiselle Chantilly, an actress and a dancer in high reputation at Paris, having, from her personal beauty no less than from her theatrical merit, attracted the Marshal's attention, had some years earlier accompanied him on his campaigns in the Netherlands as his mistress. While he was engaged in the siege of Maestricht, Favart, a man who had found means to render himself master of her affections, carried her off to Paris. After the termination of the war, Marshal Saxe caused proposals to be made her for repairing to Chambord, in order to perform on his private theatre. But she, who was married to

<sup>1</sup> She was sister of the Count Königsmark whose attentions to Sophia Dorothea, wife of George I., had turned to the ruin of the bold lover and the innocent lady. The enemies of the House of Brunswick used to speak of George II. as “Young Königsmark.” The pretended correspondence of the Count and the Princess seems to have been a weak invention of the enemy.—D.



Favart, knowing the Marshal's designs, rejected all his offers. In this dilemma, determined to gain possession of her, he applied to Monsieur de Berruyer, then Lieutenant de Police, requesting him to compel her to visit Chambord. Berruyer, desirous of obliging him, made use of every argument, and enforced them by very ample pecuniary offers. Finding, nevertheless, all his exertions fruitless, he sent her a *lettre de cachet*, ordering her immediately to prison or to Chambord. We must own that this atrocious abuse of power, which reminds us of Appius Claudius and Virginia in the consular ages of Rome, excites indignation against a Minister capable of thus prostituting his official functions in order to gratify the depraved and licentious appetites of an exhausted voluptuary. Thus pressed between imprisonment and the sacrifice of her person, she preferred the latter expedient, as many other women might have done under her circumstances, without perhaps incurring either any deep degree of culpability or exciting any strong emotions of moral reprobation. Pity indeed rather than condemnation arises in the mind of every liberal man on such a recital. It is difficult to relate the sequel of the story without involuntarily wounding decorum; yet may the moral that it contains almost apologise for such a deviation, or in some degree even demand it. Madame Favart having been reluctantly conducted to the Marshal's bed, afterwards expressed herself with some contempt respecting him. Piqued at the insinuation, he had recourse to those expedients which Pope, one of the most correct of modern poets, who exclaims—

“Curst be the verse, how soft soe'er it flow,  
That tends to make one honest man my foe,  
Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,  
Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear;”

yet has not hesitated to enumerate in his poem of "January and May." The auxiliary proved too powerful for the principal, and produced his death within a short time. Marshal Saxe expired nearly in the same manner as the Regent Duke of Orleans, a prince to whom, both in his endowments of mind and in his vices, Marshal Saxe exhibited some analogy.

Louis XV. not only occupied the most distinguished place among the European sovereigns and powers during the period of nearly eight years which intervened between the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and the commencement of the war of 1756, but for a considerable time subsequent to that rupture every success obtained was on the side of France. Beyond the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean, in Germany, as well as on the French coasts and shores, her arms maintained their ascendancy. Mezerai or Voltaire might have expatiated with exultation and pleasure on the events of Minorca, of Ticonderoga, of Braddock's defeat in Carolina, of Closterseven, of St. Cas, and of Rochefort; as, on the other hand, assuredly neither Hume nor Smollett could have derived from the narration of those unfortunate or disgraceful transactions any subject of triumph. That Louis, no less than his people, sunk under the energies of the first Mr. Pitt between 1759 and 1762 must be admitted; but all the achievements of that great Minister in both hemispheres, on the land and on the water, from the Philippines to Cuba, and from Cape Breton to Senegal, were sacrificed at the peace of Fontainebleau.<sup>1</sup> We seemed to have humbled the two

<sup>1</sup> This most unpopular peace was concluded in February 1763. Pitt attacked it in the Commons, but in the Lords Bute gloried in his work. He declared that he wished for no other epitaph to be inscribed upon his tomb than that he was the adviser of the peace. The wish was echoed in a popular epigram of the time :—

branches of the House of Bourbon only to reconstruct their fallen power, restoring all that we ought in wisdom to have retained, and retaining or acquiring all that in policy we should have surrendered to France and Spain. Witness Canada and Florida, which we preserved! Witness the Havanna, Martinique, Guadaloupe, and so many other islands or settlements which we ceded; not to include in the list Manilla, a capture unknown to the British Ministry who signed the treaty, and of which the ransom has never been paid down to the present moment! Even the popularity of George III., sustained by the most irreproachable and exemplary display of private virtues, could not stand the shock of such a peace, which covered him with nearly as much obloquy as that of Utrecht had inflicted on Queen Anne.

France from 1763 to 1770 repaired her losses; and while her councils were guided by the vigorous as well as enterprising mind of Choiseul, Louis XV., however vanquished he might have been in the preceding contest, reappeared with at least as much dignity on the theatre of Europe as Louis XIV. had done after the war of the succession. Choiseul, secure on the side of Flanders and of Germany by the alliance concluded with the House of Austria in 1756, extended succours to the Polish insurgents against Catherine II., laid the foundations of the Swedish revolution which was effected by Gustavus III. in 1772, and reduced Corsica to the obedience of his master, nearly about the time when that island gave birth to an individual whose insatiable ambition or vengeance have equally

“ Say when will England be from faction freed ?

When will domestic quarrels cease ?

Ne’er till that wished-for epitaph we read,

‘ Here lies the man that made the peace. ’ —ED.

laid waste the territory of France and polluted by his crimes or desolated by his arms the most flourishing kingdoms of the Continent. The condemnation excited by such atrocities renders it unnecessary to name a man whose very existence, and still more whose place of exile, an island situated on the delicious shore of Tuscany, midway between Naples and Toulon, surrounded by the splendour of a prince, reproach the policy of the European powers.<sup>1</sup>

Louis XV., like his predecessor, survived his only son, justifying the Roman poet's remark on the evils that accompany and characterise longevity when he says—

“Hæc data pœna diu viventibus, ut renovata  
Semper clade domus, multis in luctibus, inque  
Perpetuo mœrore, et nigra veste senescant.”

The Dauphin Louis<sup>2</sup> died at Fontainebleau, towards the end of 1765, at the age of about thirty-six. Whether we consider his death abstractedly with reference to his character and mental qualities, or whether we try it by the calamitous reign of his son, which may be said, without a metaphor, to have brought France to the block, we must be compelled to regard the Dauphin's premature end as one of the most unfortunate events which could have taken place for the French monarchy and for the House of Bourbon. It was produced, as I have been assured by persons who had frequent access to him, and who enjoyed a distinguished place in his confidence, from the effect of medicines which

<sup>1</sup> The events which have taken place since the autumn of 1814, when these remarks were made on the selection of the Isle of Elba for Bonaparte's residence, have too well proved their solidity.—W.

<sup>2</sup> The Dauphin, son of Louis XV., married Maria Theresa of Spain in 1745, and his second wife, the Princess Marie Josephe de Saxe, in 1747. He superintended for several years the education of his three children, the Duc de Berri (afterwards Louis XVI.), the Comte de Provence (afterwards Louis XVIII.), and the Comte d'Artois (afterwards Charles X.)—ED.

he took in order to repel or disperse an eruption that appeared near his mouth. He was supposed to have caught the disorder from his wife, the Dauphiness, a princess of Saxony, daughter of Augustus III., King of Poland, who had a violent scorbutic humour in her blood. Malignity proceeded so far as even to accuse the King his father of having caused the Dauphin's death by administering to him slow poison, a circumstance principally founded on the state of extenuation and languor to which he was reduced during the long malady that brought him to the grave, but for which atrocious imputation not the slightest foundation existed in truth.

Louis XV., though naturally indolent, as well as finally dissolute, and though he became, like Tiberius, profligate towards the close of his life, manifested no cruelty nor systematic atrocity of character. His son possessed firmness of mind and a solid understanding cultivated by polite letters. For the society of men distinguished by talents he displayed as strong a partiality as his father betrayed a disinclination throughout his whole reign. Devout, and in some degree tinctured with bigotry, the Dauphin nevertheless sought occasions of conversing with individuals known to have embraced ideas adverse to the Catholic faith, as well as subversive of revealed religion. With David Hume, then Secretary to the English Embassy at Paris, and at the summit of his literary reputation, or, as the "Heroic Epistle" says,<sup>1</sup> "drunk with Gallic

<sup>1</sup> "Let D——d H——e, from the remotest North,  
In seesaw sceptic scruples hint his worth ;  
D——d, who there supinely deigns to lye,  
The fattest hog of Epicurus' sty ;  
Tho' drunk with Gallic wine and Gallic praise,  
D——d shall bless old England's halcyon days."  
—Mason's "*Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*,"  
1773, lines 21–26.—ED.

wine and Gallic praise," the Dauphin, not a great while before his decease, held a long conversation, principally turning on points connected with philosophical disquisition. When Hume was presented to him, "I know," said he, "that you hold very free opinions on matters connected with revelation; but my principles are fixed, and therefore speak out to me; for otherwise I should only be conversing with a man in a mask." He was the third Dauphin in hereditary descent who had attained to manhood without ascending the French throne within the short space of fifty-four years. His death was followed, at no long interval of time, by that of the Dauphiness, his widow, and the Queen, his mother, leaving Louis XV., at nearly sixty, surrounded by his daughters and his grandchildren.

Unquestionably the four last years of his reign were passed in a manner worthy of Sardanapalus, oblivious of his public duties, insensible to national glory, and lost to every sentiment of private virtue, or even of decorum. From the instant that, dismissing Choiseul from his councils, and rejecting the favourable opportunity offered him by the dispute which arose between England and Spain relative to the Falkland Islands<sup>1</sup> for recovering the honour as well as the territories lost by France during the preceding war, he abandoned himself to pleasures no longer suited to his age; from that moment he became an object of contempt and opprobrium to his own subjects. Unfortunately for his fame, he has been principally tried and estimated by this portion of his life. Yet, even while the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Johnson published his "Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands" in 1771, which was written in the interest of the Government, who in their action after the outrage of the Spanish Government are said "to have evinced a greater regard for the honour of Spain than for that of Great Britain."—ED.

Dukes of Aiguillon and of Richelieu directed public affairs, while the great seal of France was intrusted to Maupeou, while the finances were abandoned to the Abbé Terray,<sup>1</sup> and while a woman of the most libertine description, Madame du Barry, presided over his looser hours, he at least exhibited some proofs of vigour in his treatment of the parliaments of his kingdom, whom he controlled and banished; unlike his yielding successor, who suffered himself to be tamely overwhelmed under the progressive effects of popular innovation.

When we compare the concluding years of Louis XIV.'s reign, from 1712 to 1715, with the termination of his great-grandson's life, from 1770 to 1774, we shall see that the court was alike, in both instances, completely under female control. It would indeed be as unjust to place Madame du Barry in competition with Madame de Maintenon as to elevate Thais or Campaspé to a level with Aspasia or with Livia. Yet did the palace and court of the former prince exhibit as degrading a scene of mingled hypocrisy, bigotry, and superstition as Versailles displayed a spectacle of debauch and licentious pleasure under Louis XV. If it were permitted to cite as authority for this assertion the "*Pucelle*" of Voltaire, a poem no less captivating from its wit than dangerous from its spirit and tendency, but the historical portraits scattered throughout which production are sketched with admirable ability by a master-hand, we might there behold the ignominious figure which "the Phoenix of the Bourbons" presented in the evening of his life, surrounded by devotees, priests, and monks—

"Hercule en froc, et Priape en soutane."

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<sup>1</sup> It was said by Voltaire, "I have but one tooth left, and that I keep for the Abbé Terray."—ED.

Louis XV., during his last years, excites nevertheless more disgust than his predecessor, because it is unqualified by any sentiment of pity or of respect. His death, which took place under these circumstances, was welcomed by the French as the era of their liberation from a yoke equally disgraceful and severe, while the new reign awakened in a nation characterised by its superficial or sanguine formation of mind the most extravagant visions of future felicity. We may, however, assume with certainty that Louis XV., who had refused to join Charles III. of Spain in 1770, when every circumstance invited him to a rupture with England, and who was known to have formed an unalterable determination of terminating his life in peace; we may be assured that such a prince at sixty-eight or seventy would not have sent La Fayette and Rochambeau across the Atlantic, there to imbibe the principles of revolution and republicanism, with which they returned to inoculate France and to subvert the throne. Louis XVI., only four years after his accession, in 1778, embraced, though against his own judgment, this pernicious and improvident measure, from which in an eminent degree flowed the destruction of his House. So true is it that—

“Evertere domos totas, optantibus ipsis,  
Dì faciles.”

We cannot reflect without some surprise that Louis XV. manifested more attention during his last illness to the well-being and support of Madame du Barry after his own decease than his predecessor displayed towards Madame de Maintenon, to whom he had been united nearly thirty years by the legitimate ties of marriage. Scarron's widow possessed no property whatever on the 1st of September



1715, when Louis XIV. breathed his last, except the estate of Maintenon, situate in the vicinity of Paris, which she had purchased, and a pension from the crown of two thousand louis-d'ors a year; while the Countess du Barry, besides the immense pecuniary gratifications which she had received from her royal lover during the period of her favour, was presented by him with the beautiful chateau and estate of Lusienne, situate near Marly. Louis XIV. contented himself with only recommending his future widow to the protection of the Duke of Orleans. His successor, on the contrary, at an early period of his disorder, after expressing the utmost anxiety respecting his mistress, delivered into the Duke d'Aiguillon's hands, confidentially for her use in the event of his own decease, a portfolio containing in notes the sum of three millions of livres, or about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling. The Duke, with the true spirit of a courtier, carried this deposit to the new King.

At sixty-four, Louis XV. died of the smallpox<sup>1</sup> at Versailles, precisely as his grandfather, the Dauphin, only son of Louis XIV., was carried off at the palace of Meudon by the same malady in 1711. The particulars I am about to enumerate were related to me, not long after they took place, by a gentleman, one of the King's pages, who attended him throughout the whole course of his disorder. While any reasonable expectations of his recovery were entertained, Madame du Barry continued her attendance about his person. Every idea of the nature of his disease being studiously concealed from him, he was not even permitted to regard himself in a looking-glass, lest he should

<sup>1</sup> It is generally supposed that the King caught the disease from the daughter of one of his gardeners, with whom he had an intrigue.  
—ED.

discover the change effected in his countenance by the pustules which covered his face. The Duke de Richelieu kept guard at the door of his bed-chamber, to prevent the intrusion of any priest or ecclesiastic who might procure admission, and by warning him of his danger, augment his apprehensions of a future state. But no sooner was the apparent improbability of his surviving the attack of so malignant a distemper disseminated abroad, than Madame Louisa of France, the King's youngest daughter, who had taken the veil as a Carmelite nun, quitting the convent of which she was prioress at St. Denis, repaired to Versailles. With irresistible importunity she demanded admittance to her father, whom she admonished of his perilous state and impending dissolution. He was already sinking under the ravages of the disease, which left no hope of his surmounting its violence. Madame du Barry had been sent away some days earlier to Lusienne. The King expired in a narrow white bed, placed between two windows of his apartment, which were constantly kept open on account of the heat of the weather, though the season of the year was by no means advanced, it being only the 10th day of May 1774. The successor of Louis XV. ascended the throne under the most favourable auspices. To the majesty of the first European crown he added, like Francis I., the brilliancy of opening life, not having yet completed his twentieth year. But, though young, Louis possessed neither the graces, the activity, nor the elasticity of mind usually characteristic of youth. Heavy, inert, early inclined to corpulency, and destitute of all aptitude for any exercises of the body except the chase, he seemed, like our James I., unfit for appearing in the field. His manners were shy and embarrassed, the natural result of his neglected education, which

made Madame du Barry commonly call him, during his grandfather's life, "*Le gros garçon, mal élevé.*" Yet never did any prince manifest more rectitude of intention or a warmer desire to advance the felicity of his people. Nor was his understanding, though limited, inadequate to fulfilling those beneficent designs. He even endeavoured, at an early period of his reign, to repair the want of preceding instruction by intense private application. For geography he displayed an uncommon passion, and it is well known that none of his Ministers equalled him in that branch of knowledge. Before 1778, when the French cabinet embraced the injudicious determination of aiding the Americans by sending out D'Estaing<sup>1</sup> with a fleet to their support, the King had rendered himself so perfect a master of the topography of the transatlantic continent, that from the River St. Lawrence to the southern extremity of Florida, not a headland, a bay, a river, or almost an inlet, were unknown to him. Warmly attached to the Queen his wife, and indisposed to connections of gallantry, his nuptial fidelity could admit of no dispute; and in all the relations of domestic life he might be esteemed not only blameless, but meritorious. George III. could hardly lay claim to higher moral esteem and approbation, considered in his private character.

Impressed with deep sentiments of filial piety, and of respect for the memory, as well as for the precepts or advice of his father, the Dauphin, he selected his Ministers in compliance with that Prince's written instructions, which he had carefully preserved and religiously obeyed. Those instructions ultimately impelled him to place the Count de Maurepas at the head of the new administration,

<sup>1</sup> Charles Hector, Comte d'Estaing, French Admiral, born in 1729, died in 1794.—ED.

notwithstanding that nobleman's very advanced period of life. He was indeed as old as the Cardinal de Fleury when he assumed the management of affairs, having attained his seventy-third year in 1774, and having passed the preceding twenty-five years in exile at Bourges, the obscure capital of the central and secluded province of Berri. It may, however, be questioned whether in this choice Louis XVI. was fortunate. Maurepas, though a man of superior talents, who preserved in age all the freshness of his intellect, yet plunged his country into the alliance with America, which proved eventually, at no great distance of time, a leading source of all the revolutionary calamities that have desolated France. In his selection of Vergennes for the Foreign Department, the King made a wiser choice. I was at Stockholm in June 1774, when the courier who brought the intelligence of Louis XV.'s death delivered to Monsieur de Vergennes, then the French ambassador at the court of Sweden, letters recalling him to Paris, in order to become a member of the cabinet. Happily for themselves, neither Maurepas nor Vergennes survived to witness the commencement of the Revolution.

If a combination of almost all those qualities or endowments which, in a private station, conciliate esteem and excite respect, could have secured to Louis XVI. a happy reign, he might justly have pretended to that felicity. But, unfortunately, he wanted the bolder and more affirmative features of the mind which confirm dominion, repress or extinguish innovation, retain the various classes of subjects in their respective orbits, inspire becoming apprehension, and preserve the throne from insult or attack. These defects had not indeed become apparent to the nation at large as early as 1776, but they were not the less obvious to such individuals

as had access to his person and court. Perhaps if he had been the immediate successor of Louis XIV., under whom, although the monarchy was exhausted, and had been almost overturned towards the conclusion of that reign, yet the monarchical principle and power remained firmly rooted in public opinion, he might have maintained himself in his elevation. But even before the commencement of the American war, Voltaire, Rousseau, and their disciples, had undermined the foundations of the throne and of the altar, by inculcating philosophical principles, which, however captivating and specious, were calculated to propel the inferior ranks upon the upper orders of society. A spirit of disquisition, of discontent, of complaint, and of reform, which pervaded not only the mass of the French population, but which had infected even the army, the navy, and, however strange it may seem, the Church itself, menaced the most alarming consequences. Henry IV. and Sully would have wisely anticipated and suppressed it in the birth. Louis XIII. and Richelieu would have combated and vanquished it in the field. Louis XIV. and Louvois would have either dispersed or have overawed and intimidated it by measures of vigour. Even the Regent Duke, Fleury, or Choiseul, would not have supinely allowed it to mature its destructive powers till it burst into a conflagration.

If ever France stood in need of a strong, and even a severe ruler, it was at the death of Louis XV., when the person of the prince and the throne itself were alike, although from different causes, fallen into universal contempt. A sovereign of energy, who had possessed military talents, and who, instead of reducing the household troops, disarming the royal authority, and then imprudently convoking the States General, would have mounted

on horseback, placed a strong garrison in the Bastille, arrested the first instigators to sedition, committed the Duke of Orleans to the Castle of Vincennes, and put himself at the head of his army in the last resort against his rebellious subjects—such a king might have defied the Revolution. But Louis XVI. laboured under a moral and physical inaptitude. He was the only monarch since Philip of Valois, if not the single instance that occurs since Hugh Capet, the founder of the third dynasty, who never had, on any occasion, appeared in person among his soldiers. Louis XV., and his son the Dauphin, though neither of them were distinguished by martial ardour, yet assisted in the field, and made a nominal campaign in the Netherlands. They were stationed by Marshal Saxe in such a manner previous to the battle of Fontenoy as at least to become spectators of, if not participators in, the victory gained on that memorable day. Their ill-fated descendant could never be propelled into such exertions, and he even betrayed a dislike towards showing himself at the peaceful ceremony of a review.

His personal courage itself, whatever flattery may assert or candour may suggest, was problematical. That he displayed apparent calmness and contempt of death when surrounded by a furious populace in October 1789 at Versailles, and again in June 1792 at the Tuilleries, cannot be disputed. But on the scaffold in January 1793, for the performance of which last act he must nevertheless have been prepared by all the aids of reflection and all the supports of religion, he did not comport himself with the serenity and self-possession that characterised Charles I. and Mary Queen of Scots when laying down their heads on the block. It must, however, be admitted, on the other hand, that the guillotine,

which was only an atrocious revolutionary engine, invented not so much to abbreviate the sufferings of the condemned individual as to facilitate the despatch of a number of victims with certainty in a shorter space of time, bereaved death of all its grace and dignity. I have likewise seen and read very strong attestations to the firmness displayed by the King of France in his last moments. On the 26th of January 1793, the day on which the official account of his execution arrived in London, being alone with the Duke of Dorset,<sup>1</sup> who was then Lord Steward, in a room of St. James's Palace, he received a note, which he immediately showed me, and which I copied on the spot. It contained these words :—

“PARIS, 21st January, 12 o'clock.

“The unfortunate Louis is no more. He suffered death this morning at ten o'clock, with the most heroic courage.

“To the Duke of Dorset.”

The note had no signature, but the Duke told me that he knew both the handwriting and the writer. Yet I have been assured that Louis attempted to resist or impede the executioners, who, impatient for obvious reasons to finish the performance, used a degree of violence, threw him down forcibly on the plank, in which act his face was torn, and finally thrust him under the guillotine.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Frederick, third Duke. He died in 1799.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> We have the highest authority for saying that this account is quite incorrect. The Abbé Edgeworth, who attended the King to the scaffold, gives a full account of the whole scene in his *Memoirs*. Certainly violence was used by the wretches who surrounded Louis XVI., but he pushed them away with indignation, not with fear. The Abbé writes :—“As soon as the King had left the carriage, three guards surrounded him, and would have taken off his clothes, but he repulsed them with haughtiness ; he undressed himself, untied his neckcloth, opened his shirt, and arranged it himself. The guards, whom the determined countenance of the King had for a moment disconcerted, seemed to recover their audacity. They surrounded

The expectation of a rescue, which, however hopeless, he unquestionably nourished down to the last moment, might, I am well aware, explain the King's motive for protracting the time without impeaching his courage, and might throw an air of irresolution over his deportment; but his queen and his sister displayed more decision. Marie Antoinette and Madame Elisabeth each exhibited in turn, one the heroism of an elevated mind superior to death, the other the calm resignation of a saint and a martyr, under the same circumstances. Even the Duke of Orleans himself, stained as he was with crimes and turpitudes, yet derived courage from despair, hurried to the place of execution, ascended the scaffold with rapidity, and rushed upon his fate.

In the summer of 1776, when I quitted France, Marie Antoinette may be said to have reached the summit of her beauty and of her popularity. Her favour with the nation at large declined from the period of her brother the Emperor Joseph II.'s visit to Paris in 1777, after which interview between them, her enemies, with equal falsity and malignity, accused her of sacrificing both the treasures and the interests of the French monarchy to her Austrian connections. Her personal charms, which Burke has

him again, and would have seized his hands. 'What are you attempting?' said the King, drawing back his hands. 'To bind you,' answered the wretches. 'To bind *me*,' said the King, with an indignant air. 'No! I shall never consent to that; do what you have been ordered, but you shall never bind me!' The guards insisted; they raised their voices, and seemed to wish to call on others to assist them. [After a conversation with the Abbé the King said, turning to the guards], 'Do what you will; I will drink of the cup even to the dregs.' [He walked to the scaffold with a firm step, and spoke to those around with a loud voice.] Many voices were heard encouraging the executioners. They seemed reanimated themselves, and, seizing with violence the most virtuous of kings, they dragged him under the axe of the guillotine, which with one stroke severed his head from his body."—ED.



overrated,<sup>1</sup> consisted more in her elevated manner, lofty demeanour, and graces of deportment, all which announced a queen, than in her features or countenance, which wanted softness and regularity. She had, besides, weak, or rather inflamed eyes; but her complexion, which was very fair, aided by youth and all the decorations of dress, in which ornaments she displayed great taste, imposed on the beholder. In the national estimation, her greatest defect at this period of life consisted in her having been married full six years without giving any apparent prospect of issue. But Anne of Austria had remained nearly two-and-twenty years under the same reproach, before she brought into the world Louis XIV. The Count de Provence<sup>2</sup> was likewise destitute of any children, though as early as 1771 he had espoused a daughter of the King of Sardinia; while the Count d'Artois,<sup>3</sup> youngest of the three brothers, married to another princess of Savoy, was already become a father. His son, born in 1775, had been created Duke d'Angoulême. Both the King and the Count de Provence were then generally regarded in different ways as equally inapt for the purposes of marriage. It had nevertheless been ascertained that Louis XVI. laboured under no impediment for perpetuating his race, except a slight defect in his physical organisation, easily susceptible of relief by a surgical operation, but to undergo which he for a long time manifested great repugnance.<sup>4</sup> The impor-

<sup>1</sup> Burke's glowing description, commencing, "It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France" in the "Reflections on the Revolution in France."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Monsieur, the King's brother, afterwards Louis XVIII.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Charles X.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> Madame Campan writes that about the latter end of 1777, the

tance of the case, and the pressing instances which were made to him, having at length however surmounted his objections, he submitted to it. The Queen, however, lay-in of a daughter<sup>1</sup> in December 1778, whose unmerited sufferings, filial piety, and heroism, displayed under circumstances the most disastrous, have justly rendered her an object of admiration. But Marie Antoinette did not till several years later give birth to a Dauphin.

Of the three royal brothers, only the Count d'Artois had been cast by nature in a graceful mould. All the dignity of Louis XIV. had exclusively descended to him. He appeared, indeed, to be of another race. His elder brother, the Count de Provence, who resembled the King in his person, was less known to the nation than either of the others. Moderate in his character and of retired habits, possessing a highly cultivated understanding, but destitute of brilliant or of dangerous talents, he approved himself on all occasions the most submissive of subjects. Both these princes resided constantly at Versailles, in a part of the royal palace, accompanied the King whenever he repaired to Compiègne or to Fontainebleau, commonly attended him at mass, as well as to the chase, and never absented themselves, even on an excursion to Paris, without his permission. Philip, Duke de Chartres,<sup>2</sup> too well known to us by his vindictive and criminal political intrigues, which at a

Queen, being alone in her closet, sent for Madame Campan and her father-in-law, and told them that she wished to receive their congratulations, for at length she really was the Queen of France, and she hoped soon to have children.—*Memoirs*, 1824, vol. i. p. 181.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> "Madame Royale," who married the Duke d'Angoulême, and who died in exile at Frohsdorf the 15th October 1851.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Duc d'Orleans, father of Louis Philippe.—ED.

more recent period have conducted in so great a degree to the subversion of the House of Bourbon, was already fallen, at the time of which I speak, under the public condemnation. He had then been married several years to the sole daughter and heiress of the Duke de Penthièvre, last male of the illegitimate descendants of Louis XIV.,<sup>1</sup> and the popular voice accused him of having plunged the Prince de Lamballe, his brother-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre's only son, into the debaucheries which terminated his life in the flower of his age. That young Prince espoused, at a very early period, one of the Princesses of Carignan, collaterally descended from the house of Savoy, whose tragical end in 1792, when she was massacred at the prison of La Force in Paris, forms a revolting feature of the great act of blood denominated "The French Revolution."

As the Prince de Lamballe left no issue, the Duke de Chartres was asserted to have accelerated, or rather to have produced his death, from the sordid as well as the detestable motive of inheriting in right of his consort the vast estates of Penthièvre. However destitute of proof, and perhaps even of just foundation, may have been this imputation, yet the character and notorious profligacy of the Duke obtained for it universal belief. Affecting to emulate the Regent Duke of Orleans, his great-grandfather's example, whose portrait, as I have seen, was suspended over his bed, he only imitated that prince in the licentious depravity of his manners and the abandoned nature of his amours. The Regent, whether in Italy, where he was wounded in 1706,

<sup>1</sup> Louis Philippe used to say that he was prouder of his descent from Louis XIV. himself through the illegitimate line than he was of his legitimate connection with the Bourbon family.—D.

fighting desperately in the trenches before Turin; in Spain, where he commanded the French armies with distinguished lustre; or at home while conducting the helm of affairs during the minority of Louis XV., whatever vices he displayed, redeemed them in some measure by his valour, loyalty, and capacity. His degenerate descendant incurred the abhorrence of all Europe, eminently conduced to overturn the throne of France, perished by the guillotine, and may be esteemed one of the most atrocious as well as flagitious individuals who has risen in modern ages for the calamity of mankind.

Returning to England in the summer of 1776, I went down soon afterwards on a visit to Lord Nugent,<sup>1</sup> at Gosfield in Essex,<sup>2</sup> a seat which has since, in the revolutionary events of the present times, afforded a temporary asylum to the august representative of the Capetian line, when expelled from a country over which his ancestors had reigned in uninterrupted male succession for above eight hundred years. When I visited Gosfield, among the guests who attracted most attention might justly be reckoned the late Lord Temple,<sup>3</sup> then far advanced in life and very infirm. In his person he was tall and large, though not inclined to corpulency. A disorder, the seat of which lay in his ribs, bending him almost double, compelled him in walking to use a sort of crutch; but his mind seemed exempt from

<sup>1</sup> Son of Michael Nugent. He was created Viscount Clare and Baron Nugent in 1766, and Earl Nugent in 1776. He died without male issue in 1788. His daughter, Mary, married the first Marquis of Buckingham, and to the second son of this marriage the title of Earl Nugent ultimately devolved.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Walpole gives an account of the house and park in one of his letters to Montagu.—*Letters*, ii, 118.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Richard, first Earl Temple, son of Richard Grenville, M.P., succeeded his mother, the Countess Temple in her own right, in 1752. He died 11th September 1779, and was succeeded by his nephew, George, second Earl Temple, who was created Marquis of Buckingham in 1784.—ED.

decay. His conversation was animated, brilliant, and full of entertainment. Notwithstanding the nickname of "Squire Gawkey," which he had obtained in the satirical or party productions of those times, and which, we may presume, was not given him without good reason, he had the air and appearance of a man of high condition when he appeared with the insignia and decoration of the Garter seated at table. It is well known that George II., who, though he generally yielded to ministerial violence or importunity, yet manifested often great reluctance and even ill-humour in his manner of compliance on these occasions, strongly disliked Lord Temple. Being, nevertheless, compelled, in consequence of political arrangements very repugnant to his feelings, to invest that nobleman with the order of the Garter, the King took no pains to conceal his aversion both to the individual and to the act. Instead of placing the ribbon decorously over the shoulder of the new knight, his Majesty, averting his head, and muttering indistinctly some expressions of dissatisfaction, threw it across him, and turned his back at the same instant in the rudest manner.

George III. on such occasions possessed or exerted more restraint over his passions than did his grandfather. Yet even he did not always execute the commands of his Minister, where they were disagreeable or revolting to him, without displaying some reluctance. I have been assured from high contemporary authority that at the ceremony of investing the present Marquis Camden with the order of the Garter after his return from Ireland, where he had been Lord Lieutenant,<sup>1</sup> his Majesty, who felt not a little unwilling to confer it on him,

<sup>1</sup> He was Earl Camden when, from March 1795 to June 1798, he filled the office of Lord Lieutenant.—ED.

betrayed a considerable degree of ill-humour in his countenance and manner. However, as he knew that it must be performed, Mr. Pitt having pertinaciously insisted on it, the King took the ribbon in his hand, and turning to an individual present before the new knight approached, asked of him if he knew Lord Camden's Christian names. The person thus addressed, after inquiring, informed him that it was John Jeffreys.<sup>1</sup> "What! what!" replied the King; "John Jeffreys! The first Knight of the Garter, I believe, that ever was called John Jeffreys." The aversion of George II. towards Lord Temple originated partly in personal, but more from political motives or feelings. His present Majesty's disinclination to confer the Garter on Lord Camden probably arose merely from considering his descent, though most honourable and respectable, as not sufficiently illustrious.<sup>2</sup> But the great talents and qualities of the first Earl had diffused a lustre over the name of *Pratt*. In the eye of reason and of true philosophy, such a father conferred more dignity on his issue than if they had derived their origin from Nell Gwynn, or from Mademoiselle de la Querouaille, or from Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, by a prince like Charles II. We may exclaim with Pope<sup>3</sup> on the occasion—

"What though thy ancient but ignoble blood  
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the Flood!"

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<sup>1</sup> The second name was the family name of his mother. His father succeeded Lord Northington as Lord High Chancellor in 1766. He held the sinecure office of Teller of the Exchequer, but he annually returned the salary to the Treasury. He died 8th October 1840.—D.

<sup>2</sup> "This flippant and impertinent story *must* be untrue, because it was upon the Duke of Dorset's death that Lord Camden had the Garter; and Sir Nathaniel solemnly asserts that he himself had it from the Duke, who, however, died before the thing could have occurred."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xiii. p. 210. Wraxall's answer to this is, that although he erred in saying that the Duke of Dorset told him the story, "there are ten persons now living who know and are ready to depose to its truth."—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Essay on Man, iv. 211, 212.—ED.

Yet might the sovereign, when conferring the Garter, justly consider the pretensions of a Duke of Richmond or of St. Albans as higher than those of Lord Camden, although the latter was the heir and representative of a man who united in his legal and public character some of the most shining qualities that can elevate or adorn human nature. To these endowments of the father the son originally owed the dignity of the peerage, which devolved on him. To Mr. Pitt's friendship he was subsequently indebted for the distinction of the Garter.

Lord Nugent was created an Irish Earl during the time that I was at Gosfield, having antecedently been raised to the title of Viscount Clare. He formed a striking contrast to Lord Temple in his manners and address. Of an athletic frame and a vigorous constitution, though very far advanced in years, he was exempt from infirmity, possessing a stentorian voice, with great animal spirits and vast powers of conversation. He was indeed a man of very considerable natural abilities, though not of a very cultivated mind. His talents seemed more adapted to active than to speculative life, to the drawing-room or the House of Commons than to the closet. Having sat in many Parliaments, he spoke fluently, as well as with energy and force; was accounted an able debater, and possessed a species of eloquence altogether unembarrassed by any false modesty or timidity. In the progress of a long life he had raised himself from a private gentleman of an ancient family in Ireland and a considerable patrimonial fortune to an Irish earldom, which dignity, together with his name, he procured to devolve on the late Marquis of Buckingham, then Mr. Grenville, who had married his

only daughter.<sup>1</sup> They were both likewise at Gosfield during the time of which I speak; and Lord Nugent having gone up to town for the purpose of kissing the King's hand upon his new creation, returned from thence on the following day, as we were seated at table after dinner. The object of his visit to St. James's was well known by every one present, but he immediately announced it as soon as he had taken his place by filling out a glass of wine and toasting his daughter's health as Lady Mary Grenville.

Lord Nugent, when young, had occupied a distinguished place in the favour of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and was more than once destined to have filled an office in some of those imaginary Administrations commemorated by Dodington, which were perpetually fabricated at Leicester House during the long interval of near fourteen years that elapsed between the accession of George II. and his Royal Highness's decease in 1751. The Prince died considerably in his debt; nor was the sum so due ever liquidated, unless we consider the offices and dignities conferred on Lord Nugent by George III. at different periods of his reign as having been in the nature of a retribution for loans made to his father. In return for these marks of royal favour, he presented verses to the Queen, accompanying a piece of Irish stuff, which her Majesty graciously accepted. Both the poetry and the manufacture were satirically said to be *Irish stuff*. They began, if I recollect aright—

“ Could poor Ierné gifts afford  
Worthy the mistress of her Lord,  
Of sculptur'd gold, a costly frame,  
Just emblem of her worth, should flame.”

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<sup>1</sup> The first Marquis of Buckingham added “Earl Nugent” to his titles on the death of his father-in-law, the Nestor of the Irish Peerage, in 1788.—D.



Lord Nugent was a better courtier than a poet, and he had always been distinguished by the other sex. Glover, when speaking of him, says, "Nugent, a jovial and voluptuous Irishman, who had left Popery for the Protestant religion, money, and widows." His first wife, Lady Amelia Plunket, daughter of the Earl of Fingal, brought him only one son, Colonel Nugent, who died many years before his father. Mrs. Knight, sister and heiress of the celebrated Craggs, Secretary of State under George I., buried in Westminster Abbey (and who is immortalised by Pope's epitaph on him, more perhaps than by his talents or his actions), was Lord Nugent's second wife. She brought him neither felicity nor issue, but she brought him the house and estate at Gosfield, one of the finest domains in Essex. To the Countess Dowager of Berkeley he gave his hand a third time, though not under fortunate auspices nor in a happy hour. The late Marchioness of Buckingham was the only issue of this match recognised by Lord Nugent. But his devotion to the sex, which remained proof to all trials, animated him even to the close of his life. Lord Temple and he both composed verses after this time addressed to the same object. I believe it was in the month of August 1776 that these aged peers presented some couplets of their respective compositions to the late Duchess of Gordon, then in the meridian of her charms, when Lord Temple having entertained her and the Duke her husband at Stow, lighted up the grotto for her reception. Lord Nugent to a perfect knowledge of the world joined a coarse and often licentious, but natural, strong, and ready wit, which no place nor company prevented him from indulging, and the effect of which was augmented by an Irish accent that never forsook him. It is well known that when a Bill was

introduced into the House of Commons for better watching over the police of the metropolis, in order to contribute towards effecting which object one of the clauses enacted that watchmen should be *compelled* to sleep during the daytime, Lord Nugent, with genuine humour, desired that "he might be personally included in the provisions of the Bill, being frequently so tormented with the gout as to be *unable* to sleep either by day or by night."

While I am on this subject, I cannot resist relating a frolic which rendered Lord Nugent, or rather Mr. Nugent, he being then a commoner, not a little distinguished towards the end of George II.'s reign. George, Earl of Bristol, eldest of the three sons of the famous Lord Hervey,<sup>1</sup> whom Pope has very unjustly transmitted to posterity as "Lord Fanny" and as "Sporus," like his father, manifested a degree of effeminacy in his person, manners, and dress. Probably these characteristics of deportment, while they exposed him to some animadversion or ridicule, led to a supposition that they were connected with a want of spirit, and that he would not promptly resent insult. Certain it is that Mr. Nugent, then a man of consideration, fortune, and fashion, living in the highest company of the metropolis, being one evening at Lord Temple's house in Pall Mall, where a splendid assembly of both sexes was collected, laid a singular bet with Lord Temple that he would spit in the Earl of Bristol's hat. The wager was accepted, and Mr. Nugent instantly set about its accomplishment. For this purpose, as he passed Lord Bristol, who stood in the doorway of one of the apartments, very richly dressed, holding his hat under his arm, with the inside uppermost, Mr. Nugent, turning round as if to spit, and affecting

<sup>1</sup> John, Lord Hervey, eldest son of the first Earl of Bristol, born in 1696, created a peer in 1733, and died in 1743, before his father.—ED.

not to perceive Lord Bristol, performed that act in his hat.

Pretending the utmost concern and distress at the unintentional rudeness that he had committed, Mr. Nugent made a thousand apologies to the Earl for his indecorum, and entreated to be allowed to wipe off the affront with his pocket-handkerchief; but Lord Bristol, calmly taking out his own, used it for that purpose, besought Mr. Nugent not to be discomposed, assured him that he was not discomposed himself, wiped the inside of his hat, and then, replacing it as before under his arm, asked Mr. Nugent whether he had any farther occasion for it in the same way. Having so done, the Earl, without changing a muscle of his countenance, or manifesting any irritation, quitted the place where he stood, sat down to play with the party he usually made at cards, finished his two or three rubbers, and returned home. Mr. Nugent, after triumphantly winning his bet, considered the matter as terminated, but in this supposition he counted without his host. Early on the following morning, before he was risen, he received a note, similar in its nature and contents to that which *Gil Blas* tells us he delivered to his master, Don Mathias de Sylva, but with the summons contained in which Mr. Nugent did not manifest the same careless promptitude to comply as the Spanish grandee exhibited in the novel of *Le Sage*. The note acquainted him that Lord Bristol expected and demanded satisfaction for the insult of the preceding night without delay, naming time as well as place. An instant answer was required.

Mr. Nugent now perceived that he had involved himself in a very serious affair of honour and of danger, where he had only meant to gratify a moment of frolic. However personally brave, he felt

that the exertion of his courage in order to cover or justify a premeditated insult, which no sophistry could warrant or excuse, would only aggravate his offence. Under this impression, having determined therefore to make reparation, he wrote to Lord Bristol offering every possible apology for the act committed, which he admitted would be inexcusable if it had been intended as an affront. But, as the best extenuation of so gross a violation of all decorum, he added, that it did not arise from the most remote intention of insulting the Earl, the whole matter having originated in a bet. He concluded by professing his readiness to ask pardon in the most ample manner, requesting that the business might not produce any further consequences. To this application Lord Bristol replied, that though he was disposed readily to admit and to accept the proffered reparation, yet, as the affront had been committed in public company, so must the exacted apology be made, and he named the club-room at White's as the place where he would receive it from Mr. Nugent. Not, however, by any means, Lord Bristol added, from him only ; for, as he now understood that the act itself owed its rise to a wager, it became clear that there must be another person implicated in the transaction. He insisted therefore on knowing the name of that individual, from whom, as a participator in the frolic, he should equally exact an apology, and declaring that on no other conditions would he relinquish his right to demand personal satisfaction. In consequence of so peremptory a requisition, Mr. Nugent owned that Lord Temple was the person to whom he had alluded, and both the gentlemen were finally reduced to comply with the terms by asking pardon in the club-room at White's. Lord Bristol then declared himself satisfied, and the affair was at an end.

The late Lord Sackville told me that when young he was well acquainted with Lord Mark Kerr, a nobleman whose person being, like Lord Bristol's, cast by nature in a very delicate mould, sometimes subjected him among strangers to insults from a supposition that a man of so feminine a figure would not be prone to resent an affront. In this calculation they were, however, egregiously deceived, he being a person of decided courage. Shortly after the battle of Dettingen, during the summer of the year 1743, the Earl of Stair,<sup>1</sup> then commanding the British forces in Germany under George II., entertained at his table several French officers who had been taken prisoners in that engagement. A numerous company sat down to dinner in the tent of the commander-in-chief, among whom was Lord Mark, who being son to the Marquis of Lothian and nearly related to Lord Stair, acted as one of his aides-de-camp. Lord Sackville was present on the occasion. A difference of opinion having arisen during the repast on some point, which was maintained by one of the French officers with great pertinacity, Lord Mark Kerr in a very gentle tone of voice ventured to set him right on the matter of fact. But the Frenchman, unconscious of his quality, and perhaps thinking that a frame so delicate did not enclose a high spirit, contradicted him in the most gross terms, such as are neither used nor submitted to among gentlemen. The circumstance took place so near to Lord Stair as unavoidably to attract his attention. No notice whatever was taken of it at the time, and after dinner the company adjourned to another tent where coffee was served. Lord Mark coming in about a quarter of an hour later than the others,

<sup>1</sup> John, second Earl of Stair, Field-Marshal in 1742, died in 1747.  
—ED.


Lord Stair no sooner observed him than, calling him aside, "Nephew," said he, "I think it is impossible for you to pass by the affront that you received from the French officer at my table. You must demand satisfaction, however much I regret the necessity for it." "Oh, my Lord," answered Lord Mark with his characteristic gentleness of manner, "you need not be under any uneasiness on that subject. We have already fought. I ran him through the body. He died on the spot, and they are at this moment about to bury him. I knew too well what I owed to myself, and I was too well convinced of your Lordship's way of thinking, to lose a moment in calling the officer to account."

I passed the ensuing winter of 1776-77 in London, a period which is now so distant, and the manners as well as the inhabitants of the metropolis have undergone since that time so total a change, that they no longer preserve almost any similarity. The sinister events of the American war had already begun to shed a degree of political gloom over the capital and the kingdom; but this cloud, dark as it was, bore no comparison with the terror and alarm that pervaded the firmest minds in 1792 and 1793, after the first explosion of the French Revolution, the deposition of Louis XVI., and the commencement of the Continental war in Flanders. In 1777 we in fact only contended for empire and dominion. No fears of subversion, extinction, and subjugation to foreign violence or to revolutionary arts interrupted the general tranquillity of society. It was subjected, indeed, to fetters from which we have since emancipated ourselves—those of dress, etiquette, and form. The lapse of two centuries could scarcely have produced a greater alteration in these particulars than have been made by about forty years. That costume which is now confined to the levee or the drawing-

room was then worn by persons of condition, with few exceptions, every where and every day. Mr. Fox and his friends, who might be said to dictate to the town, affecting a style of neglect about their persons, and manifesting a contempt of all the usages hitherto established, first threw a sort of discredit on dress. From the House of Commons and the clubs in St. James's Street the contagion spread through the private assemblies of London. But though gradually undermined and insensibly perishing of an atrophy, dress never totally fell till the era of Jacobinism and of equality in 1793 and 1794. It was then that pantaloons, cropped hair, and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles, together with the disuse of hair-powder, characterised the men; while the ladies, having cut off those tresses which had done so much execution, and one lock of which purloined gave rise to the finest model of mock-heroic poetry which our own or any other language can boast,<sup>1</sup> exhibited heads rounded "*à la victime et à la guillotine*," as if ready for the stroke of the axe. A drapery more suited to the climate of Greece or of Italy than to the temperature of an island situate in the fifty-first degree of latitude, classic, elegant, luxurious, and picturesque, but ill calculated to protect against damp, cold, and fogs, superseded the ancient female attire of Great Britain, finally levelling or obliterating almost all external distinction of costume between the highest and the lowest of the sex in this country. Perhaps, with all its encumbrances, penalties, and inconveniences, it will be found necessary at some not very distant period to revive in a certain degree the empire of dress.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of which I speak, the *gens de*

<sup>1</sup> The stealing of a lock of hair from Miss Arabella Fermor by Lord Petre gave rise to Pope's "*Rape of the Lock*."—ED.

<sup>2</sup>  Mrs. Piozzi attaches this significant mark to this passage.—D.

*lettres*, or "Blue Stockings," as they were commonly denominated, formed a very numerous, powerful, compact phalanx in the midst of London.<sup>1</sup> Into this society the two publications which I had recently given to the world, one on the Northern kingdoms of Europe,<sup>2</sup> the other on the history of France under the race of Valois, however destitute of merit they might be, yet facilitated and procured my admission. Mrs. Montagu was then the Madame du Deffand<sup>3</sup> of the English capital, and her house constituted the central point of union for all those persons who already were known, or who emulated to become known, by their talents and productions. Her supremacy, unlike that of Madame du Deffand, was indeed established on more solid foundations than those of intellect, and rested on more tangible materials than any with which Shakespeare himself could furnish her. She had not as yet begun to construct the splendid mansion

<sup>1</sup> "In 1750 Mrs. Montagu and some other ladies attempted to reform manners by having parties where cards could not be thought of, and where the mental power was freshest for conversation."—Doran's *"A Lady of the Last Century,"* 1873, p. 267. About seven years after this, the word "blue stocking" first occurs in Mrs. Montagu's letters. Benjamin Stillingfleet, from whose blue stockings these meetings obtained their distinguishing name, frequented Mrs. Vesey's house as much as Mrs. Montagu's. A "Blue Stocking Club" never existed, but the name "Blue Stocking" was given to all assemblies where ladies presided and scholars were welcomed. Boswell errs in fixing the date of the establishment of the Blue Stocking gathering in 1781, when they were somewhat in decay. Stillingfleet had then been dead ten years.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Cursory Remarks made in a Tour through some of the Northern parts of Europe, particularly Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Petersburg," 1775; "Memoirs of the Kings of France of the Race of Valois," 1777, 2 vols. 8vo. Both these works went through several editions. Wraxall subsequently published "The History of France from the Accession of Henry III. to the Death of Louis XIV.," 1795, 3 vols. 4to; and "Memoirs of the Courts of Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw, and Vienna," 1799, 2 vols. 8vo.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Madame du Deffand always gave good suppers, which was the principal repast at Paris at that time; and she writes in one of her letters, "Above all things, take care I have a good cook."—ED.





M<sup>rs</sup> Montagu.

engraved by R. Cooper, from a Miniature  
by Sir Godfrey Kneller.



in which she afterwards resided near Portman Square,<sup>1</sup> but lived in an elegant house in Hill Street. Impressed, probably from the suggestions of her own knowledge of the world, with a deep conviction of that great truth laid down by Molière, which no man of letters ever disputed, that *Le vrai Amphytrion est celui chez qui l'on dîne*, Mrs. Montagu was accustomed to open her house to a large company of both sexes, whom she frequently entertained at dinner. A service of plate and a table plentifully covered disposed her guests to admire the splendour of her fortune not less than the lustre of her talents. She had found the same results flowing from the same causes during the visit that she made to Paris after the peace of 1763, where she displayed to the astonished *litterati* of that metropolis the extent of her pecuniary as well as of her mental resources. As this topic formed one of the subjects most gratifying to her, she was easily induced to launch out on it with much apparent complacency. The eulogiums lavished on her repasts, and the astonishment expressed at the magnitude of her income, which appeared prodigiously augmented by being transformed from pounds sterling into French livres, seemed to have afforded her as much gratification as the panegyrics bestowed upon the "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare."

Mrs. Montagu, in 1776, verged towards her sixtieth year; but her person, which was thin, spare, and in good preservation, gave her an appearance of less antiquity. From the infirmities often attendant on advanced life she seemed to be almost wholly exempt. All the lines of her counte-

<sup>1</sup> Her nephew and heir, Matthew Montagu, told an acquaintance that his aunt built this house and the one at Sandilands in Berks, out of the savings of an income of £6000 per annum.—ED.

nance bespoke intelligence, and her eyes were accommodated to her cast of features, which had in them something satirical and severe rather than amiable or inviting. She possessed great natural cheerfulness and a flow of animal spirits, loved to talk, and talked well on almost every subject, led the conversation, and was qualified to preside in her circle, whatever subject of discourse was started, but her manner was more dictatorial and sententious than conciliating or diffident. There was nothing feminine about her; and though her opinions were usually just, as well as delivered in language suited to give them force, yet the organ which conveyed them was not soft or harmonious. Destitute of taste in disposing the ornaments of her dress, she nevertheless studied or affected those aids more than would seem to have become a woman professing a philosophic mind, intent on higher pursuits than the toilet. Even when approaching to fourscore this female weakness still accompanied her; nor could she relinquish her diamond necklace and bows, which, like Sir William Draper's "blushing riband," commemorated by "Junius," formed on evenings the perpetual ornament of her emaciated person. I used to think that these glittering appendages of opulence sometimes helped to dazzle the disputants whom her arguments might not always convince or her literary reputation intimidate. That reputation had not as yet received the rude attack made on it by Dr. Johnson at a subsequent period, when he appears to have treated with much irreverence her "Essay on Shakespeare," if we may believe his biographer, Boswell.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Boswell reports in his "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" that Johnson said, "Reynolds is fond of her book, and I wonder at it; for neither I, nor Beauclerk, nor Mrs. Thrale could get through it." Mrs. Thrale (then Mrs. Piozzi) said in her "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," that she had always commended the book; and Boswell, commenting

Notwithstanding the defects that I have enumerated, she possessed a masculine understanding, enlightened, cultivated, and expanded by the acquaintance of men as well as of books. Many of the most illustrious persons in rank, no less than in ability, under the reigns of George II. and III., had been her correspondents, friends, companions, and admirers. Pulteney, Earl of Bath, whose portrait hung over the chimney-piece in her drawing-room, and George, the first Lord Lyttleton, so eminent for his poetical and historical talents, were among the number. She was constantly surrounded by all that was distinguished for attainments or talents, male or female, English or foreign; and it would be almost ungrateful in me not to acknowledge the gratification derived from the conversation and intercourse of such a society.

Though Mrs. Montagu occupied the first place among the *beaux esprits* at this period, she was not without female competitors for so eminent a distinction. Mrs. Vesey might indeed be said to hold the second rank;<sup>1</sup> but, unlike Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse at Paris, who, under the auspices of D'Alembert, raised a separate literary standard from Madame du Deffand, Mrs. Vesey only aspired to follow at a humble distance the brilliant track of Mrs. Montagu. The former rather seemed desirous to assemble persons of celebrity and talents under her roof or at her table than assumed or pretended to form one of the number herself. Though not lodged with the same magnificence as Mrs. Montagu, yet she entertained with less form as well as less ostentation. Mrs. Vesey's repasts were at once more select and more delicate. Farther ad-

on her remark, says that Johnson uniformly expressed an unfavourable opinion of Mrs. Montagu's work.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Hannah More dedicated her poem entitled "Bas Bleu" to Mrs. Vesey, wife of Agmondesham Vesey.—ED.

vanced in life than Mrs. Montagu, she possessed no personal advantages of manner, and studied no ornaments of dress. Simplicity, accompanied by a sort of oblivious inattention to things passing under her very sight, characterised her. In absence of mind, indeed, she might almost be said to equal the Duke de Brancas, chamberlain to Anne of Austria, relative to whose continual violation of common rules Madame de Sévigné has consigned to us so many amusing anecdotes. With Mrs. Vesey this forgetfulness extended to such a point that she sometimes hardly remembered her own name. It will scarcely be credited that she could declaim against second marriages to a lady of quality who had been twice married, and though Mr. Vesey was her own second husband. When at last reminded of the circumstance, she only exclaimed, "Bless me, my dear! I had quite forgotten it." There was, indeed, some decay of mind in such want of recollection. Her sister-in-law,<sup>1</sup> who lived in the same house with her, and who formed physically as well as morally a perfect contrast to Mrs. Vesey, superintended all domestic arrangements. From their opposite figures, qualities, and endowments, the one was called "Body," the other "Mind."

In these two houses might then be seen many or most of the persons of both sexes eminent for literary attainments or celebrity of any kind. Mrs. Thrale, still better known by the name of Mrs. Piozzi, was to be met with frequently in this society, followed or attended by Mr. Thrale and by Dr. Johnson. Of the former it is unnecessary to say anything; and relative to the last, after the laboured, minute portraits which have been drawn of him under every attitude, what is it possible to say new? I will freely confess that his rugged exterior and

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Hancock.—D.

garb, his uncouth gestures, his convolutions and distortions, when added to the rude or dogmatical manner in which he delivered his opinions and decisions on every point, rendered him so disagreeable in company and so oppressive in conversation that all the superiority of his talents could not make full amends, in my estimation, for these defects. In his anger, or even in warmth of argument, where he met with opposition, he often respected neither age, rank, nor sex, and the usages of polished life imposed a very inadequate restraint on his expressions or his feelings. What are we to think of a man who, by the testimony of his own biographer, denominated Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney "rascals;" qualified Pennant by the epithet of "a dog,"<sup>1</sup> because in his political opinions he was a Whig; gave to Fielding the appellations of "a blockhead and a barren rascal;" and in speaking of King William III. invariably termed him "a scoundrel."<sup>2</sup> If not irascible, he was certainly dictatorial, coarse, and sometimes almost impracticable. Those whom he could not always vanquish by the force of his intellect, by the depth and range of his arguments, and by the compass of his gigantic faculties, he silenced by rudeness; and I have myself more than once stood in the predicament which I here describe. Yet no sooner was he withdrawn, and with him had disappeared these personal imperfections, than the sublime attainments of his mind left their full effect on the audience, for such the whole assembly might be in some measure esteemed while he was present. His beautiful compositions, both prose and poetical, the unquestionable benevolence and philanthropy of his character, his laborious and useful as well as voluminous and toilsome productions, when added to his literary

<sup>1</sup> That was mere play.—P.

<sup>2</sup> That too was in joke.—P.

fame and pre-eminence, all these combined qualities so overbore or subdued the few who ventured to contend with him, that submission or silence formed the only protection and the ordinary refuge to which they had recourse.

We never can enough regret that a man who possessed such poetic powers as are displayed in his two imitations of Juvenal, "London" and the "Vanity of Human Wishes," should have neglected or avoided that branch of composition in which he might have attained to such comprehensive eminence. If Pope's imitations of Horace have more suavity, delicacy, and taste than Johnson's productions can boast, the latter breathe a spirit of sublime and severe morality, mingled with a philosophic grandeur of thought, which is equally captivating as it is impressive and instructive. How admirable is his picture of Charles XII. as opposed to that of Hannibal!<sup>1</sup> How fine is the comparison drawn between Wolsey and Sejanus!<sup>2</sup> What can exceed the judgment shown in selecting Charles VII., the Bavarian Emperor of 1741, as opposed to the Xerxes of the Roman satirist!<sup>3</sup> The English language offers perhaps nothing more chaste, correct, and yet harmonious than these verses, which are free from any pedantry or affectation of learning. The fact, however, is that Johnson did not dare to yield to the seductions of the Muse, or to abandon himself to the inspiration of poetry. He was compelled to restrain his efforts and to limit them to the more temperate walk of prose, however capable he felt himself to be of emulating Addison, or Gray, or Pope. It is well known that he was constitutionally

<sup>1</sup> "On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,  
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Shall Wolsey's wealth with Wolsey's end be thine?"—ED.

<sup>3</sup> "All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,  
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord."—ED.



subject to a melancholy, morbid humour, which, advancing with his years, approached on certain occasions to mental alienation. Aware of his infirmity, he was apprehensive of its effects. Topham Beauclerk, who lived in great intimacy with him, often expressed to him the astonishment and regret naturally excited by his apparent neglect of this line of composition. Johnson heard him in silence or evaded any direct reply to his remonstrances. But on Beauclerk's making the same remark to Mr. Thrale, that gentleman immediately answered that "the real reason why Johnson did not apply his faculties to poetry was that he dared not trust himself in such a pursuit, his mind not being equal to the species of inspiration which verse demands, though in the walk of prose composition, whether moral, philological, or biographical, he could continue his labours without apprehension of any injurious consequences."

If, nevertheless, after rendering due homage to his paramount abilities, which no testimony of mine can affect, I might venture to criticise so eminent a person as having been deficient in any particular branch of knowledge, I should say that it was in history. Boswell has very aptly compared his understanding to an intellectual mill, into which subjects were thrown in order to be ground to atoms. And Mrs. Piozzi<sup>1</sup> somewhere remarks, in better language than I can do it by memory, that "his mind resembled a royal pleasure-garden, within whose ample dimensions everything subservient to

<sup>1</sup> One day Johnson asked Mrs. Thrale to draw his character, which she did. When she showed it to the Doctor he said, "It was a very fine piece of writing, and that I had improved upon Young, who he saw was my model, he said, for my flattery was still stronger than his, and yet somehow or other less hyperbolic." The character is printed in the "*Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*" (*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, by A. Hayward, vol. ii. p. 345).—ED.

dignity, beauty, or utility was to be found, from the stately cedar down to the lowliest plant or herb." That this assertion, if loosely and generally taken, is perfectly just, no person can dispute who knew him. That he was even thoroughly conversant in the modern history of Europe for the last two or three centuries, is incontestable; and still less will it be denied that he intimately knew all the classic periods of Greek and Roman story, most of which he had studied or perused in the original writers. But these attainments he shared with many of his contemporaries. In the history of Europe during the Middle Ages, from the destruction of the Roman Empire in the West, in the year 476, through the ten centuries that nearly elapsed before the revival of letters, I always thought him very imperfectly versed. To have compared his knowledge on these subjects with the information which Gibbon or which Robertson possessed would have been an insult to truth. But, as far as I could ever presume to form an opinion, he was much below either Burke or Fox in all general historical information.

Even as a biographer, which constitutes a minor species of history, Johnson, however masterly, profound, and acute, in all that relates to criticism, to discrimination, and to dissection of literary merit, wanted many essential qualities or evinced great inaccuracy and neglect. I do not mean to speak of his prejudices and political partialities, which hardly allow him to do justice to Milton or to Addison, because the one was in his principles a violent republican, and the other was a Whig, just as he calls Hampden "the zealot of rebellion,"—prejudices so deeply rooted in his mind as to induce him to maintain the moral superiority of Charles II., one of the most profligate princes who ever existed, over George II. I allude to errors that could only have

arisen from an ignorance of facts, with which he might and ought to have been acquainted. What shall we say when we find him telling us that Stepney, the poet,<sup>1</sup> "was invited into public life by the Duke of Dorset?" The event in question must have taken place about 1683, towards the end of Charles II.'s reign. But the creation of the Dukedom of Dorset only originated under George I. in 1720. In like manner he informs us that Prior published about 1706 "a volume of poems with the encomiastic character of his deceased patron, the *Duke* of Dorset." No doubt he means to speak of Charles, *Earl* of Dorset,<sup>2</sup> who died nearly at that time. His mistakes, or his omissions and defects of information, in narrating the life of that distinguished nobleman, are much more gross. Johnson makes him succeed to James Cranfield, *second* Earl of Middlesex, in 1674, his uncle, who was already dead many years antecedent. It was the *third* Earl of Middlesex, Lionel, to whose estates and title the Earl of Dorset succeeded, or was raised by Charles II. On all the interesting particulars of his marriages, his private life, and his decease, relative to which objects curiosity must be so naturally and warmly excited, the biographer is either silent or misinformed. I may be told that these inaccuracies, chiefly chronological, are of little moment. So is it whether the great Duke of Marlborough died in 1722 or in 1723.<sup>3</sup> But he who undertakes to compose an account of the Duke's life is bound to know, and accurately to relate, all the leading facts that attended or distinguished it. Johnson, we may be assured, would have been himself the first to detect and to expose such errors in another writer.

<sup>1</sup> George Stepney, born in 1663, died in 1707.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Charles, sixth Earl of Dorset, died in 1705.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Marlborough died in 1722.—ED.

Mrs. Thrale always appeared to me to possess at least as much information, a mind as cultivated, and more brilliancy of intellect than Mrs. Montagu; but she did not descend among men from such an eminence, and she talked much more as well as more unguardedly on every subject. She was the provider and conductress of Johnson, who lived almost constantly under her roof, or more properly under that of Mr. Thrale, both in town and at Streatham.<sup>1</sup> He did not, however, spare her more than other women in his attacks, if she courted or provoked his animadversion. As little did he appear to respect or to manage Garrick, who frequently made one of the assembly, and whose presence always diffused a gaiety over the room; but he seemed to shrink from too near a contact with Johnson, whose superiority of mind, added to the roughness and closeness of his hugs, commonly reduced Garrick to act on the defensive. Mrs. Carter, so well known by her erudition, the Madame Dacier of England, from her religious cast of character and gravity of deportment no less than from her intellectual acquirements, was more formed to impose some check on the asperity or eccentricities of Johnson. Dr. Burney and his daughter,<sup>2</sup> the author of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," though both were generally present, I always thought rather avoided than solicited notice. Horace Walpole, whenever he appeared there, enriched and illuminated the conversation by anecdotes, personal and historical, many of which were rendered more curious or interesting from his having himself witnessed their existence or received them from his father. Sir Joshua Reynolds, precluded by his deafness from mixing in or contri-

<sup>1</sup> Very true.—P.

<sup>2</sup> Fanny Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay.—ED.

buting to general conversation, his trumpet held up to his ear, was gratified by the attention of those who addressed to him their discourse, a notice which the resources of his mind enabled him to repay with interest.

Mrs. Chapone under a most repulsive exterior concealed very superior attainments and extensive knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Burke, though occupied in the toils of parliamentary discussion and of ministerial attack, which left him little leisure to bestow on literary men or subjects, yet sometimes unbent his faculties among persons adapted by nature to unfold the powers of delighting and instructing with which genius and study had enriched him. His presence was, however, more coveted than enjoyed. Dr. Shipley,<sup>2</sup> Bishop of St. Asaph, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Shipley, afterwards married to Sir William Jones, might be frequently seen there. The Abbé Raynal, who passed that winter in London, was readily admitted and eagerly courted. It must be confessed that the variety of his information, and the facility as well as readiness with which he communicated the stores of his exuberant memory, would have rendered him a valuable accession to any circle, but his loquacity generally fatigued even those whom it delighted and improved. The present Lord Erskine, who thirty years later attained to the Great Seal, had not yet commenced his career of jurisprudence. Nevertheless the versatility of his talents, the energy of his character, and the vivacity of his conversation, sufficiently manifested, even at that time, the effect which such a combination of qualities might produce when powerfully urged and impelled towards

<sup>1</sup> Very true.—P.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, who died in 1788. Dr. Johnson characterised Bishop Shipley as "knowing and conversible."—ED.

one object. Happily for himself, he did not want the strongest impulse arising from domestic pledges and embarrassments well calculated to call out every faculty of the mind. It is curious to reflect that if he had been born one step higher, if, instead of being the younger son of a Scotch earl,<sup>1</sup> his father had been a marquis, he never could have been called to the bar. His endowments, however great, assuredly would not in any other profession have raised him to the peerage, to fortune, and to fame. His celebrity, indeed, if we may believe Mr. Fox's biographer, had not extended across the Straits of Dover even in 1802, when the First Consul appears not to have recognised him on his presentation at the Tuilleries.

Mrs. Boscawen, though inferior in literary reputation to Mrs. Montagu, and perhaps possessed of less general information, yet conciliated more goodwill.<sup>2</sup> She had an historical turn of mind, and in the course of a long life passed among the upper circles of society she had collected and retained a number of curious or interesting anecdotes of her own times.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Pepys, now Sir William Pepys, to whose acquaintance and partiality I was not a little indebted for facilitating my entrance into this assembly of distinguished persons, is the last individual whom I shall enumerate. To a mind adorned with classic images and conversant with classic authors,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, Lord Erskine, was the third and youngest son of David, Earl of Buchan. He was called to the bar in 1778, appointed Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales in 1802, and Lord Chancellor in 1806. He died November 17, 1823, in his seventy-third year.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> She did.—P.

<sup>3</sup> The Hon. Mrs. Boscawen, wife of Admiral Boscawen and mother of Viscount Falmouth. "Mrs. Boscawen was all herself—that is, all elegance and good-breeding. Do you remember the verses on the lines which we attributed to Mr. Pepys?—

‘Each art of conversation knowing,  
High bred, elegant Boscawen.’”

—Mademoiselle D'Arblay's "*Diary and Letters*," iv. 72.—ED.

he united great colloquial powers.<sup>1</sup> The friend of the first Lord Lyttelton, of Sir James Macdonald, and of Topham Beauclerk, he was in principle a stanch Whig, and as Johnson might be justly esteemed a violent as well as a bigoted Tory, much political sparring occasionally took place between them, in the progress of which many sparks of historical or philosophical fire were elicited on both sides.<sup>2</sup>

Though literary reputation, or acknowledged talents and celebrity of some kind, seemed to constitute the primary title to a place in these conversations or societies, from which every species of play was altogether excluded, yet rank and beauty were to be found there, and contributed to render them interesting in the highest degree. The late Duchess Dowager of Portland,<sup>3</sup> grand-daughter of the Lord Treasurer Oxford, herself a woman of distinguished taste in various branches of art or *vertu*, was a frequent visitant. It was impossible to look on her without reflecting that while still in early childhood she had formed the object of Swift's poetic homage, and been the subject of Prior's expiring muse.<sup>4</sup> I have seen the Duchess of Devonshire,<sup>5</sup> then in the first bloom of youth, hanging on

<sup>1</sup> And does still.—P.

<sup>2</sup> True, true.—P.

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Cavendish Harley. She was the only child of Edward, second Earl of Oxford and Mortimer. Young dedicated to her, in extravagant terms, the third book of his "Night Thoughts," "Narcissa." The Duchess would only allow the initial letter of her name to be used in the dedication; but as she had recently attracted universal admiration by appearing at the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade as Cynthia, Young established her identity by addressing her as—

"Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form,  
And modestly forego thine own."

The Duchess died 7th July 1785, in her seventy-second year.—D.

<sup>4</sup> Prior wrote four witless lines to Harley's daughter, afterwards Marchioness of Caermarthen.—D.

<sup>5</sup> Georgiana Spencer, daughter of John, first Earl Spencer. She was born in 1757, married in 1774, and died in 1806.—D.

the sentences that fell from Johnson's lips, and contending for the nearest place to his chair. All the cynic moroseness of the philosopher and the moralist seemed to dissolve under so flattering an approach, to the gratification and distinction resulting from which he was nothing less than insensible. We may see in Boswell how tractable, gentle, and accommodating he became while at Inveraray, seated between the Duke and Duchess of Argyle.

It is natural to ask whether the literary society of London, at the period of which I am speaking, could enter into any competition for extent of talents and superiority of attainments with the society of Paris that met at the apartments of Madame du Deffand and of Mademoiselle l'Espinasse under the reigns of Louis XV. and XVI.? In other words, whether the persons who formed the assemblies in the English capital can support a comparison for ability and for fame with those who were accustomed to meet in the French metropolis? If I may give an opinion on this question, I should have no hesitation in saying that neither in the period of its duration, nor in the number, merit, or intellectual eminence of the principal members, can the English society be held up on any parity, scarcely, indeed, in any comparison, with that of France. The assemblies at Paris may be said to have lasted near half a century, from 1725 or 1730 down to 1775 or 1780, either in the houses of Madame du Deffand<sup>1</sup> or of Mademoiselle l'Espi-

<sup>1</sup> Marie de Vichy, born in 1696, married to M. du Deffand, Marquis de La-Lande, in 1718. Soon afterwards she became the mistress of the Regent, Duke of Orleans, subsequently she was mistress to the President Henault. Horace Walpole was first introduced to her in 1765, when she was in her seventieth year. Lady Hertford on one occasion expressed a wish that the once famous Gilly Williams would "soon be tired of blind women, old presidents, and premiers," alluding to Madame du Deffand, the President Henault, and the Duke de Choiseul (Jesse's "*George Selwyn*," 1882, vol. ii. p. 54).



nasse, or in both. The "Blue Stocking" assemblies at Mrs. Montagu's and Mrs. Vesey's remained in their brilliant state only for about fifteen years, from 1770 to 1785. Before the last of these periods Mrs. Vesey had yielded to the progress of time and of infirmity, while Mrs. Thrale, then become Mrs. Piozzi, had removed from the banks of the Thames to those of the Arno.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Montagu indeed survived, and her dinners as well as her assemblies were perpetuated to a very late period of her life, but the charm and the impulse that propelled them had disappeared. They were principally supported by, and they fell with, the giant talents of Johnson, who formed the nucleus round which all the subordinate members revolved. It became impossible, after his decease in 1784, to supply his place. Burke, as I have already observed, had more powerful avocations, and aspired to other honours and emoluments than those which mere literary distinction could bestow on him. Hume and Adam Smith, men of superior endowments, who might have contributed to support such a society, had retired to Scotland or were already dead. Robertson, Lord Kaimes, and Lord Monboddo resided at Edinburgh, only visiting London occasionally on business or for recreation. Gibbon, I believe, never emulated to be a member of these assemblies, and never attended them. He too, like Burke, looked more to politics than to letters for his substantial recom-

Madame du Deffand died on the 24th September 1780, at the age of eighty-four, having been totally blind during the last thirty years of her life. Madame Geoffrin, the rival of Madame du Deffand, should also have been mentioned by Wraxall. Walpole said of her to Gray, "She is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with."—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Thrale married Gabriel Piozzi on the 25th July 1784, and soon afterwards visited Italy for a time. The two returned to England in March 1787.—ED.

pense, being at once a member of the House of Commons and a Lord of the Board of Trade.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, indeed, the freedom of Hume's and of Gibbon's printed opinions on subjects connected with religion might have rendered their admission difficult, or their society distasteful to the principal persons who composed these parties, where nothing like a relaxation on points so serious found protection or support. Johnson, who, as we know, felt so great a repugnance to every species of scepticism on matters of religious belief, that, when composing his Dictionary, he would not cite Hobbes, the celebrated philosopher, as an authority for any word or expression used by that writer, merely because he held Hobbes' principles in aversion—Johnson, who blamed Tyers for only doing justice to Hume upon parts of his character wholly unconnected with his writings, and who said that "he should just as soon have thought of praising a mad dog,"—he would hardly have remained in the same room with Hume and Gibbon, though when taken once by a sort of surprise, he did not refuse to dine in company with Wilkes, of whom nevertheless Boswell supposes him to say, judging from Johnson's known prejudices, that "he would as soon dine with Jack Ketch as with Jack Wilkes."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is quite incorrect, as Gibbon hated politics, and soon gave himself up entirely to literature. Although the place he received was a small one, he did not escape the satirist—

"King George, in a fright  
Lest Gibbon should write  
The history of England's disgrace,  
Thought no way so sure  
His pen to secure  
As to give the historian a place."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> He has dined with him very often. They used to laugh together at the Scotch. Johnson says, in one of his letters, that he passed some evening, I forget when, cracking his jokes with Jack Wilkes against the Scotch. It was at Dilly's, and Wilkes, hearing our philosopher loud at the other end of the room—"What is he talking there

It is, however, to be recollected that Wilkes had designated the Doctor, in a note subjoined to one of his printed letters, by the name of "Pensioner Johnson."

The case was widely different in Paris, where no political pursuits distracted men of letters, and where infidelity, or even materialism, far from exciting alienation, would rather have conduced to recommend the persons professing such tenets. Among the constellation of distinguished men and women who met at the apartments of Madame du Deffand and at those of Mademoiselle l'Espinasse, the greater number were indeed avowedly *des esprits forts*; in other words, free-thinkers, who, not content with being so themselves, endeavoured to make proselytes by their writings. It is evident, therefore, that the literary circle in London was, from various causes, necessarily much more contracted than in France, where every person of eminent talents, with few exceptions, commonly resided almost altogether in the capital. For Voltaire was virtually banished beyond the French confines by the Government, and lived in the territory of Geneva more by restraint than by choice or inclination. Rousseau was a Genevese by birth, who only visited Paris from time to time, sometimes indeed resident in its vicinity, but often a wanderer, proscribed and fugitive. After stating these facts, which may explain the causes of the superiority of the literary society or assemblies of Paris over those of London, it would be idle to contest that they altogether eclipsed ours in every point of science and intellectual attainment. Who, in fact, met at Mrs. Montagu's or at Mrs. Vesey's

in praise of?" said he. "Of liberty," one answered. "Liberty!" replied Wilkes; "why the word sounds as ridiculous in his mouth as religion would in mine."—P.

that can compete with the names of Maupertuis, Helvetius, Montesquieu, Fontenelle, Voltaire, Madame du Chatelet, the Marquis d'Argens, Made-moiselle de Launay, the President Henault, D'Alembert, Diderot, La Condamine, the Duchess de Choiseul, Marmontel, Raynal, the Duke de Niver-nois, Marivaux, the Abbé Barthelemy, Turgot, Con-dorcet, and so many other illustrious persons of both sexes, who composed the "*litterati* of the French metropolis"? We can scarcely oppose to such a cloud of eminent individuals any name except that of Johnson.

The national character of the French, previous to the temporary extinction of the ancient mon-archy and the reign of Jacobinism or military despotism, seems indeed to have been more con-genial to these mixed assemblies of persons of literary endowments than is found among us. As long ago as the Regency of Anne of Austria we find that such meetings existed at Paris, and en-joyed a great degree of celebrity. The Hôtel de Rambouillet, situate in the vicinity of the Louvre, constituted, as early as 1650, the point of ré-union for all the individuals of both sexes distinguished in the career of letters. Catherine de Vivonne (the Madame du Deffand of that period), Mar-chioness de Rambouillet, presided at them, an émi-nence for which she was qualified by the elegance of her taste and the superiority of her mind. In her house, which became a sort of academy, the productions of the time were appreciated and passed in review. Dying in 1665, she was suc-ceeded by Henrietta de Coligny, Countess de la Suze, who, though with inferior reputation, con-tinued to assemble the wits and *beaux esprits* at her hôtel. Her high birth, her extraordinary

beauty, and her poetic talents, attracted to her circle every person eminent in the metropolis. It was on her that the four classic lines were composed—

“Quæ dea sublimi vehitur per inania curru?  
An Juno, an Pallas, an Venus ipsa venit?  
Si genus inspicias, Juno : si scripta, Minerva :  
Si spectes oculos, mater amoris erit.”

Subsequent to her decease in 1673, these conversations seemed to have languished for nearly fifty years, till they were revived and re-animated by the Duchess du Maine, a princess of the royal blood, grand-daughter of the great Condé, married to the Duke du Maine, natural son of Louis XIV. After her release from the castle of Dijon, to which fortress she had been committed prisoner by the Regent Duke of Orleans in 1717 for her participation in the conspiracy of Prince Cellamare, about the year 1722 she began to assemble persons of literary celebrity under her roof, in whose society she passed the greater part of her leisure. These meetings, which were principally held, not in the capital, but at the palace of Seaux, about four leagues south of Paris, continued to exist down to the Duchess du Maine's decease in 1753, and were attended by many of the persons of both sexes who afterwards formed the circles at Madame du Deffand's and at Mademoiselle l'Espinasse's apartments. During the same period of time, Madame de Tencin, sister to the celebrated Cardinal of that name, herself one of the most captivating women of France, the *Aspasia* of that country, received at her hôtel the *gens de lettres*, and may be said to have rivalled the Duchess du Maine as the protectress of taste and polite knowledge. Madame de Tencin, it is well known,

was mother of D'Alembert,<sup>1</sup> who owed his birth to illicit love.

No meetings of a similar nature or description appear to have existed in London between the restoration of Charles II. in 1660 and the conclusion of the seventeenth century, except the society that met at the house of the famous Hortensia Mancini, Duchess de Mazarin,<sup>2</sup> niece to the Cardinal of that name, who, from 1667 to the period of her death in 1699, was accustomed to receive at her apartments the *litterati* of both sexes. St. Evremond,<sup>3</sup> an exile, a foreigner, and a fugitive like herself, constituted the principal support and the ornament of these parties, where the Chevalier de Grammont, so well known by the Memoirs published under his name, was likewise to be found. It is curious to remark that the first "Blue Stocking" assemblies, and, I believe, the only meetings deserving that name which have ever been held in London down to those of which we have been speaking, were set on foot by natives of France, expatriated and resident here. For neither the letters nor the writings of Addison, Gay, Steele, Swift, or Pope indicate that any such meetings existed from 1700 down to the beginning of the present reign. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lady Hervey, the Duchess of Queensberry, and

<sup>1</sup> Jean le Rond d'Alembert, a foundling, who took his Christian name from the Church of St. Jean le Rond, near the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris, where he was exposed on November 17, 1717. His father was M. Destouches, commissary of artillery, and his mother Mademoiselle de Tencin, sister of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyons. The infant was intrusted to the care of the wife of a glazier in Paris. When D'Alembert began to be celebrated, his mother sent for him and told him of the relationship between them. His reply was, "You are only my step-mother; the glazier's wife is my mother."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The Duchesse de Mazarin settled in England in 1675, when she ran away from her husband. Her house was in Pall-Mall.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Charles de Saint Evremond, born in 1613, died in 1703, was appointed Governor of Duck Island, in St. James's Park, by Charles II.—ED.

various other females distinguished by their talents no less than by their high rank, adorned that period of time; but they do not appear to have emulated the line which Mrs. Montagu so successfully undertook, though they occasionally received in their drawing-rooms the wits and poets of the reigns of Queen Anne, of George I., and of George II. Foreigners have indeed with reason reproached the English as too much attracted by the love of play to clubs composed exclusively of men to be capable of relishing a mixed society, where researches of taste and literature constitute the basis and the central point of union.

I quitted England in the summer of 1777 and made some stay at the Hague, where I was presented by our ambassador, Sir Joseph Yorke,<sup>1</sup> to the Prince of Orange, with whom I afterwards had the honour to sup at "the palace in the wood," as well as to meet him in private society. This prince has become so well known to us, since his precipitate retreat from Holland in the winter of 1795,<sup>2</sup> by his long residence in England, that it is unnecessary to enter into any minute details relative to his character and qualities. Even at the period to which I allude he neither inspired public respect nor excited private regard. His person, destitute of dignity, corresponded with his manners, which were shy,

<sup>1</sup> The Hon. Sir Joseph Yorke, K.B., third son of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, was Envoy Extraordinary and Ambassador at the Hague from November 1751 to December 1780. He was created Baron Dover in 1788, and died a Field-Marshal, 2d December 1792, when the Barony became extinct.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> He had been Prince of Orange since 1751: he died in 1806. His son recovered Holland in 1813, became King of the Netherlands in 1815, abdicated in 1840, and died in 1843. Lord Malmesbury speaks ill of both father and son, saying of the latter, even when he and his family were existing in England on the liberality of the Government, that he was "really hostile to us." The Princess was a woman of sense and spirit, and her husband was jealous of her superior talents.—D.

awkward, and altogether unfitted to his high situation as Stadtholder. If he displayed no glaring vices, he either did not or could not conceal many weaknesses calculated to injure him in the estimation of mankind. A constitutional somnolency, which increased with the progress of age, was too frequently accompanied by excesses still more injurious to his reputation—I mean those of the table, particularly of wine. I have seen him at the Hague of an evening in a large company at Sir Joseph Yorke's in the situation that I here describe. In vigour, ability, or resources of mind, such as might enable him successfully to struggle like William III. with difficult or tumultuous times, he was utterly deficient. If William VI. had possessed the energy of that great prince, we should not have been engaged in the war with Holland which took place towards the close of 1780; neither would the Stadtholderate have been overturned in 1795, and the Seven Provinces, which successfully resisted all the power of Philip II., have ultimately sunk into an enslaved province of the Corsican ruler of France.

The two brothers, John and Cornelius de Witt, proved in every sense as formidable opponents to William III. in 1672 as Van Berkel and Neufville were to his successor in the last century; but William VI. allowed the French faction at Amsterdam, acting under the direction of Vergennes, to consolidate their strength, to conclude a treaty with the American insurgents, and to precipitate a rupture between the Dutch Commonwealth and England. His magnanimous predecessor, though he had scarcely then attained to manhood, opposed and surmounted all the efforts of the Republican party, sustained by Louis XIV., with a view to subject Holland to French ambition. Van Berkel<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "Pensionary" who was in the interest of France.—D.



merited the fate which unjustly befell the two De Witts, and only escaped punishment by the inert and incapable conduct of the Stadtholder, who permitted the fairest opportunity to pass for calling him to a public account as a violater of the laws of nations, a disturber of the public peace, and an enemy to his own country. William possessed neither the activity nor any of the endowments fitted for the conduct of armies. It must, however, be admitted that his understanding was cultivated, his memory very retentive, his conversation when unembarrassed entertaining and even instructive, abounding with historical information that displayed extensive acquaintance with polite letters, and that he joined to a fine taste in the arts, particularly in painting, a generous protection of their professors. In a period of repose he might have been tolerated; but the Stadtholderate at every time since its commencement in the person of William I., and the original revolt of the Low Countries from Philip II., has demanded the greatest energies in the individual who was placed at the head of the Dutch Commonwealth.

Nature, which rarely confers great or eminent qualities of mind in hereditary descent, seemed to have departed from that rule in the house of Nassau-Orange, where she produced five princes in succession, all of whom were conspicuous in a greater or a less degree for courage, capacity, and the abilities that ensure or confirm political power. The Roman emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, who succeeded each other, and all of whom displayed eminent talents or virtues, were unallied by ties of consanguinity. Adoption alone constituted the connection between them; while Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius, the last of those five Cæsars, was only distinguished by his

crimes or by his incapacity. William I. and his two sons (though by different wives), Prince Maurice and Frederick-Henry, who may be said to have successively occupied the office of Stadtholder or Captain-General of the United Provinces during fourscore years, from 1567 to 1647, without interruption, were three of the most illustrious men whom we have seen in modern ages. Even William II., though his end was premature and unfortunate, as he died in the flower of youth, yet manifested no less strength of character and vigour of mind than his three predecessors. The whole existence of William III., from his twentieth year down to the time of his dissolution, formed a perpetual display of fortitude, endurance, toil, and military as well as civil exertion. With him expired, in 1702, the great line of Nassau-Orange. In 1747, the dignity and functions of Stadtholder, which had been suspended during five-and-forty years, were revived in the person of William IV., head of the branch of Nassau-Dietz, collaterally related to the preceding race. However little favoured he might be by nature in his bodily formation, which resembled our popular idea of Richard III., and however moderately endowed with intellectual powers was William IV., who married the Princess Anne, daughter of George II., he at least maintained during the few years that he survived his elevation an external dignity of deportment and an irreproachable moral conduct. But in the hands of William VI., his son, may be said in every sense to have become eclipsed that great office of Stadtholder, in itself only less than royal, and under able management perhaps even more formidable than the kingly dignity!

The reception of the late Prince of Orange by George III., when he sought refuge in this country from the French invasion early in 1795, was no less

affectionate, hospitable, and cordial, than the treatment which James II. experienced in 1689 from Louis XIV. If James, expelled by his English subjects for political and religious tyranny, was lodged at the castle of St. Germain and treated with royal honours by the French monarch, William found an asylum in the palace at Hampton Court. All the princes of the royal family and the nation at large vied in demonstrations of respect, compassion, and attention towards him.<sup>1</sup> The Princess of Orange, a woman of a far more elevated, correct, and manly character than her husband, experienced as generous a welcome from the King and Queen of Great Britain as Mary of Modena, the consort of James, received in France. She extremely resembled in her figure the late King of Prussia, Frederick-William II., her brother, who was cast by nature in a colossal mould. Fortune, which had persecuted her in Holland, did not prove more favourable to her in England. Her second son, Frederick, a young prince who excited the highest expectations, and gave promise of many virtues, had entered the Austrian service after his father's expulsion from Holland. By his mother he was regarded with peculiar predilection. Exemplary in the discharge of all his military duties, to this principle his premature death was justly attributed, which took place early in 1799, occasioned by a malignant fever caught in consequence of visiting the sick soldiers in the hospitals of Venice.

His Britannic Majesty first read the account of that event in one of the French newspapers on Thursday night the 31st of January 1799. Shocked

<sup>1</sup> The Government gave £60,000 to the Princess and £160,000 to the Stadtholder. "Very unwisely," says Lord Malmesbury, who thought that by a fixed sum instead of an annuity we should be "losing *all* hold on the House of Orange," a House which he subsequently designated as "a *great* card in our hands."—D.

at the intelligence, and not being quite assured of its authenticity, he put the newspaper in his pocket, and taking the Queen aside, communicated it to her with much concern. As the probabilities were greatly in favour of its truth, or rather as little doubt could reasonably be entertained on the point, they agreed not to delay announcing it to the Prince and Princess of Orange, who might otherwise receive so melancholy a notification through the channel of the English diurnal publications, or even from common fame. This determination they executed on the following day at the Queen's house, where they detained the Prince and Princess during two or three weeks, till the violence of the emotions occasioned by the loss of their son had subsided. Some faint hopes, indeed, were entertained during eight or ten days that the intelligence might prove either premature or untrue. It was, however, soon confirmed. Prince Frederick eminently possessed talents, energy, and courage. His unfortunate father, after arriving in this country under a dark political cloud, and after residing here many years, without acquiring the public esteem or redeeming his public character, finally and precipitately quitted England under a still darker cloud, only to bury himself in the obscurity of Germany, there to expire forgotten and almost unknown. Such has been the destiny in our time of the representative of that House which, in the sixteenth century, while it conducted the armies of Holland, opposed and humbled Spain, and which, in the seventeenth century, affixed limits to the ambition of Louis XIV. A Corsican soldier has since enslaved, plundered, and conscribed the country over whose councils Barnevelt, the two De Witts, and Heinsius successively presided, for which Van Tromp and Ruyter fought, conquered, and fell, and where the spirit of freedom seemed to

have animated every individual when 'the Duke of Alva overran and desolated those provinces. When making these reflections on the modern Dutch, and contrasting their conduct with the heroism of their ancestors, we involuntarily exclaim with Goldsmith—

“Gods ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !”

At the time when I visited the Hague, in July 1777, Prince Louis, a brother of the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, and commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces, enjoyed a much higher place than the Stadtholder in public consideration. I have rarely seen a man of more enormous bodily dimensions. William, Duke of Cumberland,<sup>1</sup> son of George II., whose corpulency was extreme, fell, nevertheless, far short of him in bulk. But this prodigious mass of flesh, which it was natural to suppose would enervate or enfeeble the powers of his mind, seemed neither to have rendered him indolent nor inactive. The strength of his character and the solidity of his talents, while they supplied in some measure the defects of the Prince of Orange, animated and impelled the vast machine that he inhabited. Prince Louis manifested no somnolency when in company, nor was he ever betrayed at table into excesses injurious to his reputation. On the parade and in his military capacity he displayed equal animation and professional knowledge. Attached to the interests of the House of Orange and to those of Great Britain, he became naturally obnoxious to the French faction in Holland, which powerful party finally effected his removal from the post that he held in the service of the Republic, and compelled him to retire out of the Dutch dominions. He died, I believe, in 1788. His dismissal prepared the way for the overthrow of the Stadtholderate, not-

<sup>1</sup> The “butcher” Duke.—ED.

withstanding the temporary triumph of the late Duke of Brunswick and the capture of Amsterdam, effected in the summer of 1787 by the Prussian forces.

Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, Louis's brother, who commanded the allied army with so much reputation during the Seven Years' War from 1757 to 1763, and who occupied at that time so distinguished a place in the military history of Germany, proved himself unquestionably an able general and a good tactician, but he was by no means endowed with superior talents of any kind. In order to have secured the degree of fame that he had acquired in the field, it may indeed be asserted that he ought not to have survived his last campaign, precisely as Juvenal says of Marius that he should have breathed his last immediately after his victory over the Cimbri—

“Cum de Teutonico vellet descendere curru.”

Ferdinand soon afterwards abandoned himself to the doctrines and reveries of the *Illuminés*, an association of visionaries, who, it is well known, obtained such an ascendant about that time throughout Germany.<sup>1</sup> They reduced his mind to a degree of imbecility which could only excite compassion. It will hardly be believed that before the year 1773 he was so subjugated by them as frequently to pass many hours of the night in churchyards, engaged in evoking and attempting to raise apparitions. They practised successfully on his credulity, making him conceive that he beheld spectres or ærial forms. These occupations, which afforded sufficient proofs

<sup>1</sup> The founder of this secret political society was Dr. Adam Weishaupt, born 1748, died 1830. Two centuries previously a society (Anti-Romanist) of the same name appeared in Spain, and subsequently in France. They professed to obtain grace and perfection by their own sublime manner of prayer.—D.

of intellectual decline, having impelled the great Frederick, whose sound understanding despised the *Illuminés*, to dismiss Prince Ferdinand from his situation in the Prussian service; or, as Thiebault asserts in his "*Souvenirs de Vingt Ans*" (which perhaps is more probable), the King having liberated from arrest an officer whom the Prince had confined, he resigned.<sup>1</sup> Whichever was the fact, he then retired to Magdeburg, of the Chapter of which secularised Archbishopric he was Dean or chief.

In that city he principally resided till the time of his decease, divested of any military command, living in a sort of retreat, but keeping a good table, and receiving at dinner strangers of condition who visited Magdeburg. His income, a considerable part of which consisted in a pension from the Crown of Great Britain, enabled him to maintain an establishment becoming his rank. An intimate friend of mine, now, I regret, no more, who was about that time Minister of England at the Court of Dresden, Mr. Osborn, being well acquainted with Prince Ferdinand, used frequently to dine with him. The Prince, who treated him with great regard, wishing to make a proselyte of him, one day proposed that they should go together to a certain churchyard on that same night, promising him that a ghost would infallibly appear to them. Mr. Osborn agreed to accept the proposal and to accompany His Serene Highness to the scene of these supernatural exhibitions, provided that he would order six grenadiers, their pieces loaded with ball-cartridge, to attend them, and would enjoin the grenadiers to fire upon whatever object might assume the appearance of a

<sup>1</sup> The King released the prisoner from arrest in a fortress of which the Prince was Governor, without any reference to the latter whatever. Thence the offence.—D.

ghost. But the Prince by no means relished the idea, and the party therefore did not take place. Of the accuracy of this anecdote I can have no doubt, as it was related to me by Mr. Osborn himself, whose honour and veracity were indisputable. Prince Ferdinand continued till the period of his death in July 1792 to be a dupe and convert of the *Illuminés*.

Sir Joseph Yorke, who was afterwards created Lord Dover,<sup>1</sup> maintained a distinguished rank among the members of the Corps Diplomatique in 1777 at the Hague. His table,<sup>2</sup> splendid and hospitable, was open to strangers of every country. Educated under Horace, Lord Walpole,<sup>3</sup> and under the first Lord Hampden, his manners and address had in them something formal and ceremonious, but the vigilance and ability which he displayed during above five-and-twenty years that he was Ambassador of England to the States-General more than compensated for these defects of external deportment. Never, perhaps, at any period of modern time, except by Sir William Temple under Charles II., were the interests of Great Britain so zealously yet temperately sustained as by him, for whom the Stadtholder felt and expressed a sort of filial regard. In 1777 the English sovereign and nation still continued to preserve an ascendancy in the Dutch councils, till the augmenting misfortunes and accumulated disgraces of the American war, which finally enabled France to obtain a pre-

<sup>1</sup> The title became extinct in 1792, but it was revived in the person of the Hon. Agar Ellis in 1831.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Malmesbury, writing from the Hague in 1785, says, "If I mean to do anything of notoriety, I must wield the *spit* as well as the *pen*. Dutch hearts lie to the leeward of their stomachs, and if I now at this moment make any impression on them, it is from the beef and pudding they see in the background."—D.

<sup>3</sup> Old Horace, Sir Robert Walpole's brother, and the younger Horace's hated uncle.—ED.



dominating influence throughout the seven United Provinces, compelled Lord North to recall Sir Joseph Yorke from the Hague.

With another of his Majesty's Foreign Ministers, Mr. Wroughton, who became afterwards Sir Thomas Wroughton, I passed a considerable part of the summer of 1778 in the court and capital of Poland. Warsaw, destined to become in more recent periods the theatre and carnage of revolution, then enjoyed a delusive calm, while Austria, Saxony, and Prussia were involved in war relative to the Bavarian succession. Wroughton, at the time of which I speak, was about forty-six. He had been very handsome in his youth, and though grown somewhat corpulent, still preserved many of the graces and much of the activity of that period of life. His education, if it had not given him a very cultivated mind, had completely fitted him for the world; and a residence of more than twenty years at the two courts of Poland and Russia in a public character rendered his conversation no less entertaining than informing upon all points connected with the history of the North of Europe. From him I learned a number of curious facts respecting the two Russian Empresses, Elizabeth and Catherine, which, though they assuredly would have been transmitted to posterity by Brantôme, cannot, without violating decorum, be commemorated in the present age.

Sir Thomas Wroughton was sent at three or four and twenty to Petersburg, where he subsequently became British Consul during the reign of the former of those princesses. No man was better acquainted with her character, as well as with the political intrigues which distinguished the concluding years of Elizabeth's life. He assured me that she died a victim to her own excesses, and almost with a saucer of cherry-brandy at her lips, it having been

found impossible by any injunctions of her physicians to prevent the female attendants about her person and bed from indulging her in this pernicious gratification. The last princess of the Stuart line who reigned in this country has been accused of a similar passion, if we may believe the secret history of that time or trust to the couplet which was affixed to the pedestal of her statue in front of St. Paul's by the satirical wits of 1714.<sup>1</sup> The Empress Elizabeth's amours were such as the Messalinas and Faustinas of antiquity are asserted to have carried on in the capital of the Roman world, without delicacy, shame, or restraint. Suetonius might have found it difficult to relate, and Juvenal as impossible to exaggerate, the particulars of Elizabeth's gallantries.

Of Catherine Sir Thomas Wroughton always spoke with admiration and respect, though with freedom. To her notice he was indeed greatly indebted for his elevation in life, she having been instrumental in procuring him the appointment of Consul to Petersburg. As he was in the flower of his age at that time and of an imposing figure, he attracted her attention, and was honoured by her with such distinguishing marks of predilection as to draw upon him the resentment of the Grand Duke her husband, who, when he ascended the throne early in 1762 by the name of Peter III., obtained during his short reign Wroughton's removal from Russia. He was then sent by orders from his own court to Dresden, as Minister to Augustus III., Elector of Saxony, in his capacity of King of Poland, and he accompanied or followed that monarch from Saxony to Warsaw in the last visit that Augustus made to his Polish dominions. As

<sup>1</sup> "Brandy-faced Nan has left us in the lurch,  
Her face to the brandy-shop and her — to the church."—ED.

Wroughton had become an object of Peter's unconcealed dislike or jealousy, and as Catherine had distinguished him by personal attentions of the most flattering nature, it was not an improbable supposition that she might have carried to the utmost extent her preference of him. But he always assured me, even in moments of the greatest confidence and unreserve, that he had never violated for an instant the limits of the most profound respect towards her, nor had ever received from her encouragement for any such presumption on his part. "Count Poniatowski," said he, "was her lover. I was only her humble friend and servant."

He told me that the first time he ever heard the name of Orloff mentioned, or ever saw the individual who afterwards became as Prince Gregory Orloff the avowed favourite of Catherine in every sense, was on the following occasion :—Crossing the court of the Winter Palace at Petersburg during the year 1760, the Grand Duchess, who leaned on his arm, pointed out to him a young officer in the uniform of the Russian Guards, then in the act of saluting her with his spontoon, and added, "*Vous voyez ce beau jeune homme. Le connaissez-vous ?*" Wroughton replying in the negative, "*Il s'appelle Orloff,*" said Catherine ; "*croiriez-vous qu'il a eu la hardiesse de me faire l'amour ?*" "*Il est bien hardi, madame,*" answered he, smiling. The conversation proceeded no further, but it remained deeply imprinted upon Wroughton's recollection, who from that moment silently anticipated the future favour of Orloff. Sir Thomas Wroughton always spoke to me of Catherine's participation or acquiescence in the death of Peter III. as involuntary, reluctant, and the result of an insurmountable necessity. He even considered her knowledge of the destruction of the unfortunate Emperor Ivan, who was stabbed by his own guards

at Schlusselfbourg in 1764, with a view to prevent his being liberated by Mirowitsch, as exceedingly problematical.<sup>1</sup> But he believed, in common with all Poland, that Catherine had found means to entrap and to transfer to Petersburg the Princess Tarrakanoff, a daughter of the Empress Elizabeth, where, as was asserted, she had perished in prison, by the waters of the river Neva entering the room in which she was confined. There can be no doubt that Alexis Orloff, so well known in the annals of Catherine's reign, who then commanded the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, became on that occasion the instrument of her vengeance, or rather of her apprehension, by enticing on board his ship in the port of Leghorn the unhappy female in question. This accusation, sustained by many strong facts and apparent proofs narrated at great length, has since been submitted to the tribunal of Europe in "*La Vie de Catherine II.*," by Castera, published in 1797, soon after the Empress's decease. Sir John Dick, who, at the time of the supposed princess's seizure by Alexis Orloff, was British Consul at Leghorn, is named in the work to which I allude as having been an accomplice in the act of ensnaring and carrying her off to the Russian admiral's ship. His wife is likewise charged with a participation in so foul a conspiracy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ivan VI. became Czar when an infant. He was taken from his cradle in 1741, when Elizabeth was raised to the throne, was detained in various prisons till 1764, and in that year, at the age of twenty-three, was murdered, certainly with the knowledge of Catherine. See "*Monarchs Retired from Business*," vol. ii. p. 188.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Besides "*La Vie de Catherine*" by Castera, Abate Gorani does accuse them all indeed, and boldly. See his "*Mémoires des Cours d'Italie*."—P. Lady Dick died in February 1781. In the following May Walpole wrote to Mann, "The disconsolate widower, your friend Sir John Dick, is going to be married already, and, which is still more rash at his age, to a giantess. She is the eldest daughter of the late Sir John Clavering, and was ripened by the climate of India, like an orange to a shaddock." In August of the above year Walpole again

I lived during several years in habits of familiar acquaintance with Sir John Dick, who retained at fourscore all the activity of middle life, together with the perfect possession of his memory and faculties. He was an agreeable, entertaining, and well-bred man, who had seen much of the world. Dining in a large company at Mr. Thomas Hope's in Berkeley Square on Sunday the 10th of February 1799, I sat by Sir John Dick, and well knowing his intimacy with Alexis Orloff, I inquired of him where the Count then was. "He is," answered Sir John Dick, "at present at Leipsic, from which place he wrote to me only three weeks ago. The Emperor Paul commanded him to travel, after having made him and Prince Baratinskoi, both of whom assisted in the termination of Peter III.'s life, assist likewise at the funeral ceremonies of that prince. They held the pall, and actually mounted guard over the body in the church of the citadel of Petersburg, remaining the whole night with the corpse. Alexis went through the performance with perfect composure." Encouraged by the frankness of this reply, I ventured to ask him if he had read the narrative of the Princess Tarrakanoff's seizure related in "*La Vie de Catherine II.*" "I have certainly perused it," said he, "and not without some concern, as I am there accused by name, no less than my wife, of having been a party to the act of transporting by violence a young, unsuspecting, and innocent princess on board the Russian fleet. I will relate to you, as a man of veracity, all the part that I took and all I know relative to the pretended princess in question, who is there asserted

writes, "Sir John Dick sent his bride an abrupt letter to say he found himself too old and infirm to proceed. Did not he know three months ago that he was sixty-four? Some say he discovered that Mademoiselle was not very fond of him."—D.

to have been a daughter of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, by Alexis Razoumoffsky.

“During the time that the Russian squadron lay in the harbour of Leghorn in 1771, Alexis Orloff, who was the admiral, resided frequently, if not principally, at Pisa, where he hired a splendid house. One morning, about eleven o’clock, a Cosack who was in his service, and who acted as his courier, arrived at my door, charged with a message to inform me that his master with some company in three carriages meant to dine with me on that day. I accordingly ordered a dinner to be prepared for his reception. When he arrived, he brought with him a lady, whom he introduced to my wife and to myself, but he never named her, only calling her ‘Questa Dama.’ She was by no means handsome, though genteel in her figure; apparently thirty years of age, and had the air of a person who had suffered in her health. There seemed something mysterious about her, which excited my curiosity, but which I could not penetrate. Considering her with attention, it struck me forcibly that I had seen her before, and in England. Being determined, if possible, to satisfy myself on this point, as we stood leaning against the chimney-piece in my drawing-room before dinner, I said to her, ‘I believe, ma’am, you speak English.’ ‘I speak only a little,’ answered she. We sat down at table, and after the repast Alexis Orloff proposed to my wife and to another lady who was there present to accompany him and the female stranger on board his ship. They both declining it, Orloff took her with him in the evening. The boom or chain was then stretched across the harbour, but a boat came from the Russian admiral’s ship, into which he put the lady, and accompanied her himself safe on board.

"On the ensuing morning, when Orloff came on shore, he proceeded to my house. His eyes were violently inflamed, and his whole countenance betrayed much agitation. Without explaining to me the cause or the reason of this disorder, he owned that he had passed a very unpleasant night, and he requested me to let him have some of the most amusing books in my library, in order to divert the lady who was on board his ship. I never saw her again; but I know that soon afterwards she was sent by Alexis in a frigate to Cronstadt, where, without being ever landed, she was transferred up the Neva to the fortress of Schlusselbourg, at the mouth of the Lake Ladoga. Catherine there confined her in the very room that Peter III. had caused to be constructed with intent to shut up herself in it. The lady unquestionably died in that prison of chagrin, but she was not drowned by the water of the Neva coming into her apartment, as is asserted in '*La Vie de Catherine II.*'

"Having stated to you," continued Sir John Dick, "these circumstances, I will now inform you who, and of what description, was the lady in question. Far from being, as is pretended, a daughter of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, her father was a baker of Nuremberg in Franconia. If, on this point, my testimony should appear to you doubtful or suspicious, the present Margrave of Anspach,<sup>1</sup> who is in this country, and who knew her well, is ready to testify the same fact. She was a woman of pleasure during a short time both in Paris and here in London, at which last-mentioned city she had picked up a few words of English. Prince Nicholas Radzivil, who was driven out of Poland by the Russians, having met with her, made her his mistress, and

<sup>1</sup> The Margrave of Anspach sold his principality to the King of Prussia, and settled in England, where he died in 1806.—ED.

carried her with him into Italy. In order to revenge himself on Catherine, who had expelled him from his native country and confiscated his immense estates in Lithuania, he resolved on calling her the Princess Tarrakanoff, pretending that she was Elizabeth's daughter. Such she was in fact considered to be by many who saw her, and the report acquiring strength, soon reached Petersburg. Catherine, naturally alarmed at the existence of a female pretender, who might lay claim to the very throne of Russia, and being informed that Prince Radzivil asserted her right to the empire, as a legitimate daughter of Elizabeth by Razoumoffsky, to whom she had been secretly married, thought that not a moment was to be lost in securing the person of so dangerous a rival. She issued private orders therefore to Alexis Orloff, enjoining him to gain possession of the pretended princess, at all events, and by every possible means, either of money, or of violence. To so great a height did the Empress's apprehensions rise, that Orloff avowed to me he had received the positive commands of her Majesty to pursue her even to Ragusa if necessary, where it was understood she had retired, to demand her from the Government of that small Republic, and if they should refuse to give her up, to bombard the city and to lay it in ashes. But Alexis found means to entrap or to entice her without either disturbance or hostility. He treated her as his mistress<sup>1</sup> while he resided at Pisa, and while she lay on board his ship at Leghorn. These are all the particulars that I know relative to her, and all the share that I had in her detention or her misfortunes."

It is probable that this recital, however natural

<sup>1</sup> Gorani says he married her. See "*Mémoires des Cours d'Italie.*"—P.



and plausible it may appear, or however true it may be in point of fact, will nevertheless by no means carry complete conviction to every mind. I confess that it neither produced that sentiment in me at the time when Sir John Dick related it, nor, on the fullest consideration, am I thoroughly persuaded that the person in question was not the daughter of Elizabeth. It seems to be universally admitted, and I have always been so assured, that the Empress did privately espouse Razoumoffsky; that she had by him, between the years 1740 and 1745, various children, one of whom was brought up and called the Princess or Countess Tarrakanoff. Prince Radzivil might, as is asserted in "*La Vie de Catherine II.*," have contrived means to carry her off, and after accompanying her to Rome, might there have quitted or deserted her. It is unquestionable, even by Sir John Dick's account, that Catherine dreaded her, and that Orloff, by her orders, decoyed, ensnared, and made himself master of the person of this unfortunate female. But that in order to effect his base and barbarous purpose, Orloff actually married her, or pretended so to do; that she passed several days under Sir John Dick's roof in amusement and dissipation; that "the consul, his wife, and the wife of Rear-Admiral Greig, took their seats by her in the barge which conveyed her on board the Russian squadron;" finally, that a British consul would dishonour himself, his sovereign, and his nation by openly facilitating so perfidious an act; all these assertions of Castera, and many others relative to her treatment on board Orloff's ship, appear to me wholly undeserving of credit. They are, indeed, completely disproved by Sir John Dick's narrative to me, unless we suppose him utterly devoid of truth and honour. On the other hand, that he should have remained silent under

such a charge, made in the face of all Europe, without attempting to repel or to disprove it in as public a manner as it was brought forward, seems almost like a negative admission of its veracity. His denial of the accusation, given in private conversation to me, could not redeem his character to the world at large. Sir John, we may likewise remember, lay under personal obligations to Catherine II., who had conferred on him one of the Russian orders of knighthood, and from his connection with whom, while Orloff lay at Leghorn with her fleet, he had derived great pecuniary advantages. The manner in which Alexis treated him, by bringing to his house a stranger, without previously soliciting permission, whom he never announced to Sir John or to his wife by name, and with whom he lived as his mistress, these facts seem to imply great subservience on the part of the British consul, and will probably induce us to pause before we give implicit belief to his assertions. I leave, however, the decision on this point to every man's own opinion.<sup>1</sup>

But was the lady in question the daughter of Elizabeth, or not? It seems to me impossible, from want of evidence, to reply satisfactorily to the question. I confess, however, that I think it more probable she should have been, as Sir John Dick asserted, a German woman, whom Prince Radzivil had instructed or induced to assume the name and title of Princess Tarrakanoff. It is even very difficult altogether to condemn the Empress Catherine for endeavouring to get possession of her person. For, had she passed over to Ragusa, and from thence into the Ottoman dominions, she would have been, when once in the hands of the Turks, with whom Russia was at war, a most dangerous com-

<sup>1</sup> Gorani accuses Sir John Dick quite openly.—P.

petitor to the throne. We must recollect that Catherine herself had attained the imperial dignity by a revolution, and the consequent destruction of her husband, without any right of descent. To her an impostress was nearly as formidable as a rightful pretender to the crown. The history of the false Demetrius,<sup>1</sup> in the beginning of the seventeenth century, so famous in the Muscovite annals, might justly inspire her with apprehension. Similar scenes might be renewed under her own reign in the interior of that vast empire. Pugatcheff<sup>2</sup> had long been considered by a great part of the Russian people as the Emperor Peter III. These considerations must, at least in a political point of view, justify Catherine for taking measures to prevent the female in question from being made an instrument in the hands of vindictive or ambitious individuals to accomplish their projects of vengeance against herself. In the eyes of morality and of humanity, the whole reign and administration of that Empress, however brilliant and imposing it may appear through the medium of Voltaire's or of the Prince de Ligne's writings, cannot bear a close examination or support a severe scrutiny.

The first Grand Duchess of Russia, Wilhelmina, Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, who, on her marriage with the Grand Duke Paul, assumed the name of Natalia Alexiowna, perished, like the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff, in the prime of life, and under

<sup>1</sup> Demetrius, the younger brother of the Czar Feodor, said to have been killed by his brother-in-law, Boris. On the accession of Boris to the throne of Russia, a monk of a noble family of Moscow, named Griska Utropeja, personated Demetrius, and pretended that he had escaped from the murderous hands of Boris. On the death of the latter he succeeded in raising himself to the throne, but he was not allowed to hold the dignity long, and was proscribed as an impostor.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Yemelka Pugatscheff, a Russian impostor, born in 1726, died in 1775.—ED.

circumstances that excited at the time much commiseration. I have seen the Grand Duchess in question at the drawing-room at the palace of Peterhoff in 1774, soon after her marriage. She had been chosen in preference to two of her sisters, who accompanied her on the journey from Germany to Russia. Those princesses must have been very deficient in personal attractions if Paul's selection resulted from her superiority in that respect above her sisters. I have rarely beheld a young person less favoured by nature. She had a scorbutic humour in her face, nor did her countenance indicate either intelligence or dignity; but she was said to be amiable and pleasing in her manners. To the great joy of Catherine, as well as of the Empire at large, which anxiously expected the birth of an heir, she became pregnant in 1775. That she died about two years subsequent to her marriage, during the confinement incident to her accouchement, is certain;<sup>1</sup> but the precise nature of her death is not well ascertained, and produced various reports, some of which were very injurious to the Empress's reputation. I have myself heard them, while I resided at Vienna, from persons of the highest distinction, particularly from two princes of Hesse-Philipstahl, within three or four years after the Grand Duchess's decease, but I believe that they were not entitled to implicit credit. It was likewise generally asserted that she had formed a strong attachment for one of the handsomest as well as most accomplished young noblemen about the court of Petersburg, with whom she had entered into a correspondence of a delicate description. The circumstance becoming known to Paul, occasioned him no ordinary disquietude. A fact which seemed to give probability to the story

<sup>1</sup> Levesque speaks confidently on this point, and to the effect stated in the text.—D.

is that the nobleman himself to whom I allude was then resident at Vienna, to which city he had been sent, as common fame affirmed, by Catherine, on the complaints of her son, immediately after the death of the unfortunate princess his wife. I knew him very familiarly while at Vienna. He since filled the post of Envoy from the Empress of Russia at the Court of Naples, where he was believed to have carried his temerity and his success even higher than he had done at Petersburg. Few men whom I have ever seen or known were more formed by nature to be beloved by women. His figure was advantageous; his manners, though lofty, were gay and captivating whenever he desired to conciliate good-will, and his countenance, which somewhat resembled that of a Calmuck, had in it nevertheless an air of great distinction, spirit, and intelligence. He had served in the Russian fleet under Alexis Orloff, was present at the memorable victory of Tschismé,<sup>1</sup> on the coast of Natolia, in 1770, where the Turkish squadron in that bay was destroyed, and had acquired, under Admirals Elphinstone and Greig, not only a knowledge of naval tactics, but of the English language likewise, which he spoke with uncommon ease and fluency. The secret history of the imperial family of Russia, from the reign of Peter I. inclusive down to the present time, has already furnished, and will, as it gradually becomes known, con-

<sup>1</sup> After Orloff's fleet had, with difficulty, defeated an inferior Turkish force near the Isle of Scios on the 7th July 1770, the remnant of the Ottoman squadron took shelter in the port of Tchesmé (where, B.C. 191, the Roman flotilla vanquished that of King Antiochus). The English officers in the Russian service proposed to destroy the vessels of the Moslems, cooped up in the narrow bay. Elphinstone, Greig, and Dugdale accomplished the undertaking. The latter especially distinguished himself, although he was ill supported by the Russians. The few Turkish ships that were not burnt were captured, with the town, fort, and batteries; and for this exploit (the sole honour of the achievement of which belonged to the English officers) Orloff received the surname of Tchesmeski.—D.

tinue to afford matter of the most curious as well as interesting nature. When we reflect that three Emperors, Peter, Ivan, and Paul, have successively perished by violent means within little more than half a century, and when we consider that this stupendous empire, embracing so vast a portion of the globe, has been governed almost exclusively by women from the year 1725 down to 1796, including a space of more than seventy years; lastly, when we recollect that of the four females who have successively swayed the sceptre of Peter the Great, two, namely, Catherine I. and II., were Germans or Livonians, unconnected except by marriage with the ancient Czars of Muscovy—when we contemplate these facts, we cannot be surprised if this Asiatic empire, newly assimilated to our European monarchies and states, should present scenes altogether unlike the manners of London, Paris, or Vienna.

After the death of the Grand Duchess, Catherine was at least determined to lose no time in providing for her son a second wife. For this purpose she applied, almost immediately subsequent to the decease of the unfortunate Natalia Alexiwna, to the great Frederick, King of Prussia, requesting him to select for Paul a German princess, to supply the vacancy occasioned in the imperial family. She even sketched out with her own hand the prominent qualities of person and of mind which she considered as principally requisite in the object of his choice. This delicate commission Frederick executed with great ability; and, having fully ascertained the ground, he recommended the Princess Sophia of Wirtemberg<sup>1</sup> to the Empress for her future daughter-

<sup>1</sup> The name of the Princess was Dorothea. She was the eldest daughter of the Prince of Wirtemberg-Montbeliard, and was seventeen years of age when, to her great delight, and after changing her

in-law. It was perhaps impossible to have made a more judicious selection for such a dangerous eminence, which frequently conducted to a convent, to Siberia, or to a grave. She was not quite seventeen years of age, and she possessed, besides the graces of youth, personal attractions well calculated to retain the Grand Duke's affection. Her understanding solid, and her deportment blameless, secured universal esteem, while, at the same time, she neither displayed such talents, energy of character, or ambition, as could render her an object of Catherine's apprehension. Paul, accompanied by Marshal Romanzoff, whose victories over the Turks rendered him so justly celebrated, was sent by Catherine in 1776 to Berlin, where Frederick, after contributing to procure him a wife, entertained him at Potsdam in the most splendid manner.

At one of these entertainments, given, if I recollect right, in the new palace near Sans Souci, in the midst of the dinner a large piece of the ceiling fell down on the table, involving the room and the company in dust, confusion, and astonishment, not unlike the accident which Fundanius relates as happening at Nasidienus's supper.<sup>1</sup> The King, with

religion with alacrity, she married Paul. Before she left her father's little court she prepared herself for her future duties by practising court ceremonies. "She saluted," says the Baroness d'Oberkirch, "all the empty fauteuils, to practise, as she said, being gracious, taking care, however, that none should receive more or less than its due show of royal condescension." On entering the Greek Church, she was re-baptized in the name of Maria Feodorowna. She was the mother of Alexander, Constantine, and Nicholas.—D.

<sup>1</sup> A somewhat similar accident is said to have occurred a few years after at Stowe, the seat of the Marquis of Buckingham. Whilst the Marquis and one of the ladies of his family were standing at the fire, one of the largest beams fell between them, and they narrowly escaped being killed. The beam was discovered to have perished by dry rot. A like accident occurred from the same cause, the dry rot, at Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square, and was near destroying the company at dinner.—ED.

admirable presence of mind, instantly throwing his arms round Paul, who sat next him, held the Grand Duke closely embraced, without suffering him to stir, till the cause as well as the consequences of the disaster were ascertained. When it was discovered to have arisen only from a defect in the plaster of the ceiling, and to have been altogether casual, a courier was immediately despatched to Petersburg, stating the particulars to Catherine, assuring her at the same time that her son was in perfect safety. We cannot help admiring the quickness of Frederick's perception, which, ignorant as he was from what cause so unusual and alarming an event originated, led him, without a moment's delay, to participate the danger and the misfortune, if such existed, with the Grand Duke. In fact, they must have perished together, if they perished at all. The malignity of mankind would unquestionably have suspected or attributed treachery of some kind had any fatal accident in which the King was not enveloped befallen his guest. Frederick by his promptitude obviated the possibility of misrepresentation either at Petersburg or in any other of the courts of Europe.

During the first ten or fifteen years of the reign of Catherine II. it was commonly believed, and in Poland, where men ventured to state their opinions in conversation with more freedom than they dared to do in Russia, I have heard it often maintained in private society, that the Grand Duke Paul would sooner or later disappear, as Peter III. did in 1762, and as the unfortunate Emperor Ivan did in 1764. If Catherine had dreaded her son, such an event might have been not impossible; but she knew him, and did not fear him. The strongest mark of her superiority to all apprehension from his machinations or efforts to ascend the Russian throne before



his time was the permission which she gave him to travel over Germany, France, and Italy. Peter I. never extended such a degree of emancipation to his son, the Czarowitz Alexis. Paul was accompanied on his tour by the Grand Duchess, for whom he then manifested the utmost fondness, though the testimonies which he gave her of his affection were not always regulated by delicacy or propriety. Sir William Hamilton<sup>1</sup> told me that when Paul arrived in Naples in 1782, he had the honour to accompany the Grand Duke and Duchess on their excursions round that city for the purpose of viewing Portici, Pompeii, and the other principal objects of curiosity. "The first time," said Sir William, "that I was with them in a coach, we had not proceeded far, when Paul, as if unconscious that I was present, throwing his arms about the Grand Duchess, began to kiss her with as much warmth as he could have shown if they had been alone and newly married. I was somewhat embarrassed at this unusual display of matrimonial attachment, hardly knowing which way to direct my view, for there was no other person with us in the carriage; and as I sat opposite to their Imperial Highnesses, I could not easily avoid seeing all that passed, though I affected to look through the glass at the objects around me. At length, the Grand Duke addressing himself to me, said, '*Monsieur le Chevalier, j'aime beaucoup ma femme.*' It was impossible not to credit the assertion after the proofs which he had just exhibited. But we had not proceeded a mile farther,

<sup>1</sup> The well-known Ambassador and husband of Nelson's Emma. He was a son of Lord Archibald Hamilton, whose wife was said to have been the mistress of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Born in 1730, he was appointed English Ambassador at Naples in 1764, and was recalled in 1800, made a Knight of the Bath in 1791, and a Privy Councillor in 1791. He died, April 6, 1803, much impoverished owing to his expenditure for special services at Naples being disallowed by the Ministry.—ED.

when he recommenced the same demonstrations of attachment, which he repeated many times before we arrived at Portici, usually observing to me each time, 'Vous voyez que j'aime beaucoup ma femme.' I could only express my satisfaction at his felicity, concealing my astonishment at the testimonies of it which I had witnessed." It would have been happy for this violent and infatuated prince if he had never ascended the Russian throne, but had always continued in the state of political annihilation to which his mother had reduced him, and in which she retained him to the close of her life.

The pretended Princess Tarrakanoff and the first Grand Duchess of Russia were not the only females of high rank who expired by a premature death under Catherine's reign. Augusta Caroline, eldest daughter of the late celebrated Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, who fell at Auerstadt<sup>1</sup> in 1806, is supposed to have perished in a manner equally mysterious. This princess, who was born towards the end of the year 1764, before she attained the age of sixteen, was married to the Prince of Wirtemberg, since elevated by Bonaparte to the dignity of a king.<sup>2</sup> He was then about twenty-six years old, and might be considered as eventual pre-

<sup>1</sup> Or Jena, where the parade army of Prussia exhibited its inefficiency in the field. The Duke was as dissolute as he was brave. "But he too was betrayed," says Lord Malmesbury (vol. iv. p. 365). "He (very foolishly at his age) kept a French actress: Montjoy, his aide-de-camp, procured her for him. She attended him to the camp. Montjoy never left his person: he was close to him when he was shot, which was by a jäger on foot, who presented his carbine so close that the ball went in under the left eye (the Duke was on horseback) and came out above the right, quite through the upper part of the nose. Yet the Duke was not in the French *milieu*, and how any man could be so near him, surrounded as he was by his staff, is not easy to decide, unless we suppose that Montjoy's brother, . . . who was with Bonaparte, knew exactly where the Duke of Brunswick was to be found, and by connivance with Montjoy produced the result."—D.

<sup>2</sup> On the submission of the Duke to Napoleon he was made a king, and the royal title was afterwards confirmed to him by the Congress of Vienna in 1815.—ED.

sumptive heir to his uncle, the reigning Duke of Wirtemberg, Charles Eugene, who had no issue. When I was at the Court of Brunswick in the autumn of 1777, at which time the Princess was near thirteen, I saw her more than once in the apartments of her mother. She had a very fair complexion, light hair, pleasing features, and an elegant figure. Some years subsequent to her marriage she accompanied the Prince her husband into Russia, where he entered into the military service of that sovereign, to whose heir, as has been already stated, his sister was married. They resided during a considerable time at Petersburg, or in other parts of the Russian Empire; but in 1787 he quitted Catherine's service and dominions, leaving his wife behind, of whose conduct it was asserted he had great reason to complain. They had then three children living, two sons and a daughter, whom the Empress permitted him to take away when he withdrew from her employ; but she retained the Princess under her own protection. At the end of a year or two it was notified to the Prince of Wirtemberg as well as to the Duke of Brunswick, by order of the Empress, that the consort of the one and the daughter of the other was no more. The Duke, her father, immediately demanded in the most pressing terms that her body might be delivered up to him; but this request was never granted, nor did he even receive any such authentic proofs of her decease, and still less of the circumstances attending it, as could satisfy him on the subject. Doubts were not only entertained whether she died a natural death, but it remained questionable whether she did not still survive, and was not existing in Siberia or in the Polar deserts, like many other illustrious exiles of her own family, who had been banished thither

by the Empress Elizabeth when she ascended the throne in 1741, on the deposition of Ivan.

<sup>1</sup>[I have heard this subject agitated between 1789 and 1795, when great uncertainty prevailed respecting the point, though it seemed to be generally believed that she was dead, and that her end had been accelerated or produced by poison. It was natural to ask who had caused the poison to be administered? Was the Empress herself the perpetrator of this crime? And even if that fact should be admitted, was not the Prince of Wirtemberg a party to its commission? Though no positive solution of these questions could be given, yet, when the fact of the Princess's death came to be universally understood, many persons doubted the innocence of her husband. The King of Great Britain himself was strongly imbued with this opinion, of which he made no secret. In 1796, when the first overtures were begun on the part of the Court of Wirtemberg for the marriage of their Prince to the Princess-Royal, George III. was so prepossessed against him for having been supposed privy to the death of his wife, that he would not listen to the proposal. In order to remove an obstacle of such magnitude the Prince sent over to London a private agent, instructed to ascertain from what quarter the accusation came, and furnished with documents for disproving it. That agent I personally knew while he was here employed on

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph was expunged from all editions since the first, in consequence of a prosecution instituted by Count Woronzow, who moved the Court of King's Bench against the author, and the rule was made absolute (June 1815), after some severe observations by the Chief-Justice (Lord Ellenborough). The sentence was that Wraxall should pay a fine and be imprisoned. For the trial, see "Annual Register," 1815. In the "Morning Post" of September 2, 1816, it was stated that the Regent had remitted the remainder of the imprisonment. The Count was married to a daughter of the Earl of Pembroke, who himself married a Russian lady.—ED.

the above mission. He possessed talents, spirit, zeal, and activity, all which he exerted in the cause. Having clearly traced the imputation up to Count Woronzow, who long had been, and who then was, the Russian envoy at our court, he induced the Count by very strong personal remonstrances, accompanied, as we may suppose, by proofs, to declare his conviction of the Prince's innocence and utter ignorance of the nature and manner of his wife's end. It followed, of course, that Catherine, under whose exclusive care she remained, could alone be accused of having produced it. The agent finally satisfied his Majesty that the Empress, and she only, caused the Princess to be dispatched, without the participation, consent, or knowledge of her husband, if, after all, she did not die of a natural death.<sup>1]</sup>

In May 1797 the Princess-Royal of England was married to the Prince of Wirtemberg, who before the conclusion of that year became Duke by the decease of Frederick Eugene, his father. Early in the summer of 1798, Sir John Cox Hipplesey, conversing with me on the subject of the first Princess of Wirtemberg's death, assured me that he had seen and perused all the papers relative to her imprisonment and decease, which, at the desire of the Prince himself and by his authority, had been transmitted to George III., who, after a full inspection of them, became perfectly convinced of his having had no part, direct or indirect, in that dark and melancholy transaction.

"Frederick-William, reigning Duke of Wirtemberg," said Sir John, "entered when young, as is well known, into the Prussian service. Old Fre-

<sup>1</sup> Her sister, Caroline of Brunswick, wife of George IV., used to allude to a report that Augusta had been seen alive in Italy after the period of her alleged death. See "*Lives of the Queens of England of the House of Hanover.*"—D.

derick liked and distinguished him. Wishing to attach him to the House of Brandenburg by permanent ties, and considering him as a man of promising abilities, the King himself set on foot, and finally concluded, his marriage with the eldest daughter of his own favourite nephew and general, the Duke of Brunswick. This event took place in 1780. About five years afterwards Frederick, being disposed to form a second alliance with the family of Wirtemberg by marrying his great nephew, the present King of Prussia, as soon as his age would allow, with the Princess Elizabeth, sister to the Prince, despatched him to Petersburg for that purpose. His instructions were to apply to his sister the Grand Duchess for the exertion of her influence at the Court of Stuttgart, in order to prevail on the Duke to promise his niece to the eventual heir of the Prussian monarchy. This negotiation was, however, rendered unsuccessful by the demand which the Emperor Joseph II. made about the same time of the Princess Elizabeth of Wirtemberg for his nephew Francis, hereditary Prince of Tuscany, now Emperor of Austria, a marriage which was actually accomplished early in 1788.

“When the Prince of Wirtemberg arrived in the capital of the Russian Empire, this Austrian alliance was already settled, or at least was too far advanced in its progress to be overturned by his interference. After making, therefore, every effort in his power, through the Grand Duchess, to prevent its accomplishment, and finding these exertions fruitless, he returned to Potsdam. Whether Frederick suspected any duplicity or insincerity on his part, or whether it was the result merely of disappointment, it is certain that he received the Prince very coldly; and the Empress of Russia having soon afterwards invited him into her service, he

quitted that of Prussia and revisited Petersburg. She employed him in the war that began in 1787 against the Turks, and he commanded one of the three armies which took the field. The van, consisting of forty thousand men, was intrusted to him. He is said to have displayed great military talent, to have distinguished himself much, and to have rendered essential services to Catherine.

“At the time that he entered the Russian service he carried the Princess his wife with him to Petersburg, as well as the two sons and the daughter which she had brought him. Being in the flower of her youth, endowed with many amiable qualities of mind and of deportment, she soon became a favourite of Catherine, in whose society and intimate confidence she occupied a distinguished place. It can hardly, however, excite astonishment that such an intercourse should have been calculated to corrupt her morals. The court and palace of the Empress were scenes of dissipation and licentiousness. Yet, when the Prince went to serve against the Turks, he necessarily left his wife exposed to all these temptations. In effect, during his absence, she conducted herself so imprudently that when he returned, after the conclusion of the campaign, to Petersburg, he found himself compelled to adopt some strong measures towards her. Being placed in this painful situation, he wrote to her father, the Duke of Brunswick, informing him of his daughter's misconduct, and consulting him on the mode of action proper to be pursued under those circumstances. It was agreed between that, as a preliminary step, she should be removed out of Russia, and the Prince accordingly demanded Catherine's permission to quit her dominions together with his wife and family. The Empress allowed him to retire and to take with him his children, but she

peremptorily refused to permit him to carry his consort back to Germany. All remonstrance proving vain, the Princess therefore remained behind, and he quitted Petersburg with his sons and daughter to return to Wirtemberg.

"About a fortnight after his departure the Princess, without any reason assigned, was sent by order of Catherine to the castle of Lhode, about two hundred miles from Petersburg, but in what part or province of that vast empire I am unable to assert. There, it seems, under close confinement, she remained about eighteen months, but all her German attendants, male and female, were withdrawn from her. At the end of that time the Prince received letters from the Empress informing him that his wife was dead of a *hæmorrhage*. Similar information was conveyed by Catherine to the Duke of Brunswick, the unfortunate Princess's father. No particulars were stated, nor, as far as appears, were any other circumstances ever known respecting her. Thus situated, the Duke of Brunswick, conscious that he could neither bring his daughter to life nor call the Empress to account, acquiesced patiently in the calamity; but during some years he did not communicate to the Duchess, his wife,<sup>1</sup> the intelligence of her daughter's death. She therefore remaining in ignorance of the catastrophe, continued to believe that the Princess was still confined at Lhode, or existing somewhere in the deserts of Russia. The Duchess used even to speak of her as being alive in Siberia, and this fact will account for the universality of the report."

If the account given me by Sir John Dick relative

<sup>1</sup> The Princess Augusta, eldest child of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and sister of George III., born 31st July 1737, married the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, 16th January 1764. She died in London, 22d March 1813, when Brunswick was in the possession of the French.—ED.



to the supposed Princess Tarrakanoff left many circumstances obscure and unexplained in the history of that female, it must be owned that after considering this narrative no less uncertainty still pervades the story of the Princess of Wirtemberg. It is natural to ask, why did Catherine cause the Princess to be imprisoned? Her gallantries, however culpable or notorious they might be, yet constituted no crime against the Empress of Russia, who exhibited in her own conduct an example of emancipation from all restraint and decorum on the article of female irregularities of deportment. It was the Prince, her husband, whom she had dishonoured and incensed. What proof is adduced, except assertion, that he did not know of the intentions of Catherine to confine and banish her? In the case of the two Emperors, Peter III. and Ivan, as well as in the instance of the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff, the motives which might impel her to deprive them of life are obvious; but none such appear in the instance before us. There are, moreover, other particulars which may lead us to hesitate in forming a decisive opinion on the subject. The death of the Princess of Wirtemberg at Lhode was announced and stated in all the German almanacks printed by authority to have taken place on "the 27th September 1788." Her husband remained a widower near eight years after that event before he aspired to the hand of the Princess-Royal of Great Britain. During so long a period of time he seems to have adopted no measures for repelling the calumnious reports circulated all over Europe—reports which, however false (and such I esteem them to have been), yet had made the most unfavourable impression even in England. George III. became indeed perfectly convinced of his innocence before he consented to the union of the Prince

with his eldest daughter.<sup>1</sup> But though the King yielded to the undeniable proofs brought upon this point, yet, from feelings of paternal fondness or solicitude, he did it with reluctance. So far indeed was he from pushing forward the alliance, that I know from good authority he offered the Princess, after all the preliminaries were adjusted and the marriage was fixed, to break it off if she chose to decline it, taking on himself personally the whole responsibility of its failure.<sup>2</sup> Over the precise nature of the first Princess of Wirtemberg's illness and death a deep or impenetrable veil is drawn. We must leave it to time to unfold, if it does not rather remain, as is more probable, for ever problematical.

Before I quit this subject, I cannot help remarking that during the course of the eighteenth century the family of Brunswick in its different branches produced no less than five princesses who exhibited in succession the most conspicuous examples of human infelicity. The first of them was Sophia of Brunswick-Zell, married to George I., who for her alleged but unproved gallantries with Count Königs-mark was confined during near forty years at the sequestered seat or castle of Ahlden in the Electorate of Hanover, where she expired in 1726. Charlotte-Christina of Brunswick-Blanckenberg, who espoused in 1711 the Czarowitz Alexis, only son of Peter the Great, a princess endowed by nature with almost every amiable and estimable quality of body and of mind, equally beautiful and exemplary, fell a victim in the flower of her youth

<sup>1</sup> Wraxall affirms at page 151 that his authority for this statement was Sir John Cox Hippenesley.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The marriage took place in 1797. Thirty years later, the Princess, a widow and an invalid, paid a brief visit to London. She died in Wirtemberg in 1828, having survived her mother, Queen Charlotte, ten years.—D.

to the ferocious treatment that she experienced from her husband. She died at Petersburg in childbed, at twenty-one years of age, in 1715; or rather, she disappeared, for her death has been contested in the strongest manner, and is certainly matter of historic doubt. She was lamented by the whole Empire except by Alexis, whose brutal character rendered him incapable of appreciating her value. Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel furnished the third instance, in the person of Elizabeth, married in 1765 to the late King of Prussia, then only Prince-Royal; divorced four years afterwards for her irregularities; confined at Stettin, where I have seen her in 1774, and relative to whose private history I could state from high authority the most minute as well as curious particulars, if I were not restrained by motives of respect and delicacy towards the illustrious persons who are connected with her by descent or by alliance. I believe she still survives, forgotten and unknown, in some part of the Prussian dominions, after having witnessed the temporary subversion of her own house, and the calamities inflicted on that of Brandenburg by Bonaparte. Caroline Matilda of Brunswick-Lunenbourg, posthumous daughter of Frederick, late Prince of Wales, and sister of George III., stands fourth in this enumeration. To her I had the honour of being well known, having dined frequently at her table, and was employed by her during the year preceding her decease in conducting negotiations of the deepest importance to her future felicity. Banished by a revolution from Denmark in 1772, effected under the name of Christian VII., her imbecile husband, she only survived it about three years, terminating her short career in the prime of life at Zell in 1775. Augusta Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, whose melancholy history and whose ambiguous end we have been surveying,

continues but does not terminate the list. We have witnessed an equally tragical event, on which I shall be silent, but which will excite the commiseration of our descendants. It must be esteemed singular that in the lapse of little more than a hundred years such a fatality should seem to have marked so many females of that illustrious family.

In the autumn of 1778 I visited Dresden for the second time, a court which was rendered peculiarly agreeable to the English at that period by the hospitality and polished manners of his Majesty's Minister to Saxony, Sir John Stepney, one of the finest gentlemen who have been employed on foreign missions during the course of the present reign. The *Illuminés* had made a deep and general impression on the public mind at Dresden, chosen only a few years earlier for the scene of the famous exhibition of the apparition of the Chevalier de Saxe. Having already given some account of that extraordinary imposition, I will not resume the subject here ; but I shall relate a story told me during my residence there by the Count de Felkesheim. He was a Livonian gentleman settled in Saxony, of a very improved understanding, superior to credulity, and exempt from superstition. While we were together on an excursion of pleasure in the month of October 1778, our discourse accidentally turning on the character and performances of Schrepfer. "I have conversed," said he to me, "with several of the individuals who were present at the scene of the spectre or phantom presented by him in the gallery of the palace of the Duke of Courland. They all agreed in their account of the leading particulars. Though I do not pretend to explain by what process or contrivance that business was conducted, I have always considered him as an artful impostor and his audience as dupes.

Yet am I not so decidedly sceptical on the possibility of supernatural appearances as to treat them with ridicule because they may seem to be unphilosophical. I received my education in the University of Königsberg, where I enjoyed the advantage of attending lectures in ethics and moral philosophy delivered by a professor who was highly informed in those branches of science. He laboured, nevertheless, though an ecclesiastic, under the imputation of being tinctured with incredulity on various points connected with revealed religion. When therefore it became necessary for him, in the course of his lectures, to treat on the nature of spirit as detached from matter, to discuss the immortality of the soul, and to enter on the doctrine of a future state, I listened with more than ordinary attention to his opinions. While speaking of all these mysterious subjects, there appeared to me to be so visible an embarrassment both in his language and his expressions, that I felt the strongest curiosity to question him further respecting them. Being left alone with him soon afterwards, I ventured to state to him my remarks on his deportment, and I entreated him to tell me if they were well founded or only imaginary suggestions.

“‘The hesitation which you noticed,’ answered he, ‘resulted from the conflict that takes place within me when I am attempting to convey my ideas on a subject where my understanding is at variance with the testimony of my senses. I am, equally from reason and reflection, disposed to consider with incredulity and contempt the existence of apparitions. But an appearance which I have witnessed with my own eyes, so far as they or any of the perceptions can be confided in, and which has even received a sort of subsequent confirmation from other circumstances connected with the original

fact, leaves me in that state of scepticism and suspense which pervaded my discourse. I will communicate to you its cause. Having been brought up to the profession of the Church, I was presented by Frederick-William I., late King of Prussia, to a small benefice situated at a considerable distance south of Königsberg. I repaired thither in order to take possession of my living, and found a very neat parsonage-house, where I passed the night in the bed-chamber which had been occupied by my predecessor. It was in the longest days of summer, and on the following morning, which was Sunday, while lying awake, the curtains of the bed being undrawn, and it being broad daylight, I beheld the figure of a man, habited in a sort of loose gown, standing at a reading-desk, on which lay a large book, the leaves of which he appeared to turn over at intervals. On each side of him stood a little boy, in whose faces he looked earnestly from time to time, and, as he looked, he seemed always to heave a deep sigh. His countenance, pale and disconsolate, indicated severe distress of mind. I had the most perfect view of these objects; but, being impressed with too much terror and apprehension to rise or to address myself to the appearances before me, I remained for some minutes a silent and breathless spectator, without uttering a word or altering my position. At length the man closed the book, and then taking the two children, one in each hand, he led them slowly across the room, my eyes eagerly following him, till the three figures gradually disappeared, or were lost behind an iron stove, which stood at the farthest corner of the apartment.

“‘ However deeply and awfully I was affected by the sight which I had witnessed, and however incapable I was of explaining it to my own satisfaction, yet I recovered sufficiently the possession of

my mind to get up, and, having hastily dressed myself, I left the house. The sun was long risen, and directing my steps to the church, I found that it was open; but the sexton had quitted it, and on entering the chancel, my mind and imagination were so strongly impressed by the scene which had recently passed, that I endeavoured to dissipate the recollection by considering the objects around me. In almost all the Lutheran churches of the Prussian dominions it is an established usage to hang up against the walls of some part of the building the portraits of the successive pastors or clergymen who have held the living. A number of these paintings, rudely performed, were suspended in one of the aisles. But I had no sooner fixed my eyes on the last in the range, which was the portrait of my immediate predecessor, than they became riveted to the object, as I instantly recognised the same face which I had beheld in my bed-chamber, though not clouded by the same deep expression of melancholy or distress.

“The sexton presented himself as I was still contemplating this interesting head, and I immediately entered into conversation with him on the subject of the persons who had preceded me in the living. He remembered several incumbents, concerning whom, respectively, I made various inquiries, till I concluded by the last, relative to whose history I was particularly inquisitive. ‘We considered him,’ said the sexton, ‘as one of the most learned and amiable men who have ever resided among us. His charities and benevolence endeared him to all his parishioners, who will long lament his loss. But he was carried off in the middle of his days by a lingering illness, the cause of which has given rise to many unpleasant reports among us, and which still forms matter of conjecture. It is, however, com-

monly believed that he died of a broken heart.' My curiosity being still more warmly excited by the mention of this circumstance, I eagerly pressed him to disclose to me the information which he had received on the subject. 'Nothing respecting it,' answered he, 'is known with certainty; but scandal had propagated a story of his having formed a criminal connection with a young woman of the neighbourhood, by whom it was even asserted that he had two sons. As a confirmation of the report, I know that there certainly were two children who have been seen at the parsonage, boys of about four or five years old. But they suddenly disappeared some time before the decease of their supposed father, though to what place they were sent, or what is become of them, we are wholly ignorant. It is equally certain that the surmises and unfavourable opinions formed respecting this mysterious business, which must necessarily have reached him, precipitated, if they did not produce, the disorder of which our late pastor died; but he is gone to his account, and we are bound to think charitably of the departed.'

"It is unnecessary to say with what emotions I listened to this relation, which seemed to give proof of the existence of all that I had seen. Yet, unwilling that my mind should become enslaved by phantoms which might have been the effect of error or deception, I neither communicated to the sexton the circumstance which I had just witnessed, nor even permitted myself to quit the chamber where it had taken place. I continued to lodge there without ever again witnessing any similar appearance, and the recollection itself insensibly began to wear away as the autumn advanced. When the approach of winter rendered it necessary to light fires through the house I ordered the iron stove



that stood in the room, behind which the figure that I had beheld, together with the two boys, seemed to disappear, to be heated for the purpose of warming the apartment. Some difficulty was experienced in making the attempt, the stove not only smoking intolerably, but emitting a most offensive smell. Having, therefore, sent for a workman to inspect and repair it, he discovered in the inside, at the farthest extremity, the bones of two small human bodies, corresponding perfectly in size, as well as in other respects, with the description given me by the sexton of the two boys who had been seen at the parsonage. This last circumstance completed my astonishment, and appeared to confer a sort of reality on an appearance which might otherwise have been considered as a delusion of the senses. I resigned the living, quitted the place, and returned to Königsberg; but it has produced upon my mind the deepest impression, and has, in its effects, given rise to that uncertainty and contradiction of sentiment which you remarked in my late discourse.'"

Such was Count Felkesheim's story, which, from its singularity, appeared to me deserving of commemoration, in whatever contempt we may justly hold similar anecdotes.

One of the most interesting portions of my life was the time that I passed at Naples in the summer of 1779. Sir William Hamilton, his Majesty's Minister, constituted in himself the greatest source of entertainment no less than of instruction which that capital then afforded to strangers. He honoured me with his friendship, which he continued to the end of his life. In his person, though tall and meagre, with a dark complexion, a very aquiline nose, and a figure which always reminded me of Rolando in "*Gil Blas*," he had nevertheless such

an air of intelligence, blended with distinction, in his countenance, as powerfully attracted and conciliated all who approached him. His mother, Lady Archibald Hamilton, enjoyed, as is well known, a very distinguished place in the favour of Frederick, late Prince of Wales, and Sir William himself was brought up from early life with his present Majesty, to whom he became, after his accession to the crown, an equerry. At a very early period he entered into the army, and was at the battle of Fontenoy, as well as, I think, at that of La Feldt.

The versatility of Sir William Hamilton's character constituted a pleasing feature of his composition. Endowed with a superior understanding, a philosophic mind, and a strong inclination to the study of many branches of science or of polite letters, which he cultivated with distinguished success, he was equally keen as a sportsman in all the exercises of the field. After being actively occupied in studying the phenomena of Vesuvius like the elder Pliny, or in exploring the antiquities of Pompeii and of Stabia, with as much enthusiasm as Pausanias did those of ancient Greece, he would pass whole days, and almost weeks, with the King of Naples, either hunting or shooting in the royal woods, or more laboriously engaged in an open boat, exposed to the rays of a burning sun, harpooning fish in the Bay of Castellamare. When beyond seventy years of age he preserved undiminished his love of these sports, particularly of fishing, which he followed with great ardour, thus mingling pursuits or passions of the mind and of the body, rarely united in the same man. I have seen him, not more than two years before his decease, perform the "Tarantella," an Apulian dance, which, as it is undoubtedly a copy of the Bacchant amusements of antiquity, demanded no slender portion of

animal strength and spirits. The occasion was so remarkable, that I am induced to relate the particulars. Intelligence of the glorious victory obtained by the English fleet under Lord Nelson before Copenhagen arrived in London on Wednesday the 15th of April 1801. Sir William Hamilton then resided opposite the Green Park in Piccadilly.<sup>1</sup> About ten o'clock that evening I went to his house with Sir John Macpherson. We found assembled there the Dukes of Gordon and Queensberry, Lord William Gordon, Monsieur de Calonne, Mr. Charles Greville, Sir William's nephew, the Duke de Nöia, a Neapolitan nobleman, Mr. Kemble, the celebrated comedian, and his wife, the Reverend Mr. Nelson now Earl of that name, with some other persons. Lady Hamilton, inspired by the recent success of Lord Nelson against the Danes, of which victory he had transmitted her with his remaining hand all the particulars as they occurred, from the 1st up to the 8th of April, the day when the despatches came away, after playing on the harpsichord, and accompanying it with her voice, undertook to dance the "Tarantella."

Sir William began it with her, and maintained the conflict, for such it might well be esteemed, during some minutes. When unable longer to continue it, the Duke de Nöia succeeded to his place, but he too, though nearly forty years younger than Sir William, soon gave in from extenuation. Lady Hamilton then sent for her own maid-servant, who being likewise presently exhausted, after a short time another female attendant, a Copt, perfectly black, whom Lord Nelson had presented her on his return from Egypt, relieved her companion. It would be difficult to convey any adequate idea of this dance; but the fandango and *seguedilla* of the

<sup>1</sup> At what was then No. 23. Sir William died there in 1803.—D.

Spaniards present an image of it. Madame de Stael has likewise attempted to describe it, and has made "Corinne" perform it at a ball in Rome with the Prince of Amalfi, a Neapolitan, for her partner; but she has softened down the voluptuous features that render it too powerful over the imagination and the senses. Yet she admits the "*melange de pudeur et de volupté*" inherent in the exhibition, which conveyed an idea of the Bayadères or Indian dancing-girls. "Corinne" could not be more familiar with the attitudes of the antique statues than was Lady Hamilton, nor more capable of transporting the spectators to the Vatican or to the Medicean Gallery by her accurate and picturesque imitation of the models there preserved, with which she seemed at times to identify herself.<sup>1</sup> Castagnettes and the tambour de Basque constitute essential accompaniments of the performance, which, at its termination, from the physical exertion necessary, left her in a state of dissolution, like the Delphic priestess overcome by the inspiration of Apollo, or perhaps more like Semelé, as Correggio has painted her, after her interviews with Jove. We must recollect that the two performers are supposed to be a satyr and a nymph, or rather a fawn and a Bacchant. It was certainly not of a nature to be performed except before a select company, as the screams, attitudes, starts, and embraces with which it was intermingled gave it a peculiar character.

I have mentioned it principally in order to show Sir William Hamilton's activity and gaiety at that advanced period of life. Though a finished courtier, he preserved such an independence of manner, without any mixture of servility or adulation, as seemed

<sup>1</sup> A volume of engravings showing Lady Hamilton's celebrated attitudes was published by Frederick Rehberg, historical painter in his Prussian Majesty's service at Rome in 1794.—ED.

eminently to qualify him for the diplomatic profession. His conversation offered a rich diversity of anecdote. With these qualifications, it cannot excite wonder that he formed the delight and ornament of the Court of Naples. No foreign Minister, not even the *family* Ambassadors of France and Spain resident there, enjoyed in so eminent a degree the favour or affection of his Sicilian Majesty. Nor was the attachment of that prince to Sir William merely limited to hunting or fishing parties. He gave the English Envoy many solid proofs of sincere regard—a regard that extended to the British Crown and nation. One striking instance of this partiality took place in June 1779, while I was at Naples. The King of Spain, Charles III., having written confidentially to his son Ferdinand that he should probably be induced soon to take part with Louis XVI., by entering into a war with Great Britain, as he effectively did immediately afterwards, the King of Naples, though enjoined by his father to secrecy, communicated the letter itself to Sir William Hamilton. He even accompanied the disclosure with the assurance of his deep regret at the adoption of such a line of policy, and his own firm determination never to enter into the hostile combination against England, though himself a prince of the House of Bourbon, and included in “the family compact” by name. Sir William transmitted the King’s communication as well as his assurance on the point without delay to Lord North, then first Minister. I received this anecdote from himself at Naples.

It was in Sir William’s and the first Lady Hamilton’s company<sup>1</sup> that I learned a number of curious as well as authentic particulars relative to the King

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Hamilton married a lady of large property in 1755.—  
ED.

and Queen of Naples. Ferdinand IV. was then in the twenty-ninth year of his age; tall, muscular, and active in his frame, capable of immense fatigue, and apparently formed for long life. His features were coarse and harsh, his nose immoderately long, like that of his father and brother, Charles III. and Charles IV., Kings of Spain; but, nevertheless, though the component parts of his face might separately be esteemed ugly, the general expression of his countenance had in it something intelligent and even agreeable. There was an unpolished simplicity, or rather a rude nature, in his manner, attitudes, deportment, and conversation, which pleased for a double reason—on account of its own intrinsic claim to be liked, and as being rarely found on a throne, where we naturally expect disguise, artifice, and habits of concealment. If he conversed little with strangers, he seemed, at least when he talked, always to say what he thought; and he betrayed no defect of natural understanding, though he was altogether destitute of that elegance and art which frequently veil the want of information. He always reminded me of a rustic, such as Abdolonymus,<sup>1</sup> elevated by fortune or accident to a crown; but it was an amiable, honest, sensible, well-intentioned rustic, not altogether unworthy of such an elevation.

The Queen of Naples,<sup>2</sup> who was not quite twenty-seven years old at this time, seemed much better fitted to represent the majesty of the throne and to do the honours of a court. Though neither possessing beauty of face nor loveliness of person, yet was she not absolutely deficient in either respect, and if her figure might be esteemed too large, still it

<sup>1</sup> Abdulmumen, a man of obscure origin, who became King of the Saracens in Africa by the help of Abdallah, founder of the sect Mohavedi. He died in 1156.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Caroline or Charlotte, daughter of Maria Theresa, and sister of Maria Antoinette of France.—D.

wanted neither grace, dignity, nor even attractions. She is the only Queen whom I ever saw weep in public, before a crowd of both sexes assembled in her own palace on a gala-day. The festival on which I was presented to her happened to be the anniversary of the loss of her eldest son, who expired exactly a year before, in 1778. He was a very fine boy, of promising expectations, to whom his mother was passionately attached. The ignorance of the Neapolitan physicians, as it was believed, had caused his death; for, being seized with a violent sickness and pain in his stomach, from which an emetic promptly administered might probably have relieved him, they had the imprudence to bleed him, and thereby brought on fatal convulsions. Such was the Queen's distress at the recollection of the event which had taken place on this painful anniversary, that she was unable to repress her emotions. In the presence-chamber of the palace at Naples she stood under a canopy, her right hand held out to the nobility and courtiers, as they approached to kiss it, holding in her left a handkerchief with which she perpetually wiped her eyes, that were suffused in tears. It was difficult not to be favourably impressed towards a princess capable of giving such an involuntary testimony of her maternal tenderness in a place and situation where she could not be suspected of artifice or affectation.

Having drawn this imperfect outline of the King and Queen of Naples from my own personal observations, I shall enumerate some of the particulars respecting them which I collected in the course of conversation from Sir William or Lady Hamilton—I mean his first wife, who, though not beautiful, was a most accomplished and superior woman.

“No European sovereign, without exception,” said Sir William, “has been so ill educated as the

King of Naples. He is not even master of any language except Italian, without making a painful effort, and his ordinary Italian is a Neapolitan dialect, such as the lowest of his subjects, the Lazaroni, speak in their intercourse with each other. It is true that he understands French, and converses in it when indispensable ; but he rarely reads any French author, and still more rarely attempts to write in that language. All the correspondence that takes place between him and his father, the King of Spain, is carried on in the common Neapolitan jargon. They write very frequently and largely to each other, but seldom does this intercourse embrace political subjects; their letters, of which I have seen numbers, being filled with accounts of the quantity and variety of the game respectively killed by them, in which the great ambition of each prince is to exceed the other. Ferdinand, indeed, who scarcely ever reads, considers as the greatest of misfortunes a rainy day, when the weather proves too bad for him to go out to the chase. On such occasions recourse is had to every expedient by which time may be killed, in order to dissipate his Majesty's ennui, even to the most puerile and childish pastimes. The King's education was systematically neglected ; for Charles III., alarmed at the imbecility of his eldest son, Philip, Duke of Calabria, who, on account of his recognised debility of understanding, was wholly set aside from the right of succession, strictly ordered at his departure for Spain in 1759 that this, his third son, should not be compelled to apply to any severe studies, or be made to exert any close application of mind.

“ I have frequently seen the unfortunate Duke of Calabria, who has only been dead a few years, and who, by his birth, was heir to the Spanish monarchy. He attained to manhood, and was treated with certain



distinctions, having chamberlains placed about him in constant attendance, who watched him with unremitting attention, as otherwise he would have committed a thousand excesses. Care was particularly taken to keep him from having any communication with the other sex, for which he manifested the strongest propensity; but it became at last impossible to prevent him altogether from attempting to emancipate himself in this respect. He has many times eluded the vigilance of his keepers, and on seeing ladies pass through the apartments of the palace, would attack them with the same impetuosity as Pan or the satyrs are described by Ovid when pursuing the nymphs, and with the same intentions. More than one lady of the court has been critically rescued from his embraces. On particular days of the year he was allowed to hold a sort of court or levee, when the foreign Ministers repaired to his apartments to pay their compliments to him; but his greatest amusement consisted in having his hand held up by his attendants, while gloves were put on it, one larger than another, to the number of fifteen or sixteen. His death was justly considered as a most fortunate event, under such circumstances of incurable imbecility.

“Before the present King fully attained his seventeenth year, the Marquis Tanucci, then Prime Minister, by directions issued from the Court of Madrid, provided him a wife. The Archduchess Josepha, one of the daughters of the Empress Maria Theresa, being selected for Queen of Naples, and being represented to young Ferdinand as a princess equally amiable in her mind as she was agreeable in her person, he expected her arrival with great pleasure, mingled even with some impatience. So much more severely was it natural that he should feel the melancholy intelligence when it

arrived from Vienna that she was dead of the small-pox. In fact, he manifested as much concern as could perhaps be expected in a prince of his disposition and at his time of life, for the death of a person whom he had never seen. But a circumstance which greatly augmented his chagrin on the occasion was its being considered indispensable for him not to take his usual diversion of hunting or fishing on the day that the account reached Naples. Ferdinand reluctantly submitted to such a painful and unusual renunciation ; but having consented to it from a sense of decorum, he immediately set about endeavouring to amuse himself within doors in the best manner that circumstances would admit, an attempt in which he was aided by the noblemen in waiting about his person. They began therefore with billiards, a game which his Majesty likes, and at which he plays with skill. When they had continued it for some time, *leap-frog* was tried, to which succeeded various other feats of agility or gambols. At length one of the courtiers, more ingenious than the others, proposed to celebrate the funeral of the deceased Archduchess. The idea, far from shocking the King, appeared to him and to the whole company as most entertaining, and no reflections either in the indecorum or want of apparent humanity in the proceeding interposed to prevent its immediate realisation. Having selected one of the chamberlains, as proper from his youth and feminine appearance to represent the Princess, they habited him in a manner suitable to the mournful occasion, laid him out on an open bier according to the Neapolitan custom at interments, and in order to render the ceremony more appropriate as well as more accurately correct, they marked his face and hands with chocolate drops, which were designed to imitate the pustules of the

small-pox. All the apparatus being ready, the funeral procession began, and proceeded through the principal apartments of the palace at Portici, Ferdinand officiating as chief mourner. Having heard of the Archduchess's decease, I had gone thither on that day in order to make my condolence privately to his Majesty on the misfortune, and entering at the time, I became an eye-witness of this extraordinary scene, which, in any other country of Europe, would be considered incredible, and would not obtain belief.<sup>1</sup>

"The Archduchess Caroline being substituted in place of her sister, and being soon afterwards conducted from Vienna to Naples, the King advanced in person as far as the Portella, where the Neapolitan and Papal territories divide, in order to receive his new bride.<sup>2</sup> She was then not sixteen years old, and though she could not by any means be esteemed handsome, yet, besides youth, she possessed many charms. Ferdinand manifested on his part neither ardour nor indifference towards the Queen. On the morning after his nuptials, which took place in the beginning of May 1768, when the weather was very warm, he rose at an early hour and went out as usual to the chase, leaving his young wife in bed. Those courtiers who accompanied him, having inquired of his Majesty how he liked her, 'Dormé com un amazzata,' replied he, 'et suda com un porco.' Such an answer would be esteemed anywhere except at Naples most indecorous; but here we are familiarised to far greater

<sup>1</sup> The Quarterly Reviewer (J. W. Croker) says of this anecdote, "We quite agree with Sir William Hamilton that this anecdote is nearly incredible; and as we have not had the advantage of hearing it from himself, we have the less scruple in saying that we do not believe one word of it."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xiii. p. 197.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Caroline of Austria, daughter of Maria Theresa, and sister of Marie Antoinette, was married to Ferdinand, King of Naples, in 1768.—ED.

violations of propriety. Those acts and functions which are never mentioned in England, and which are there studiously concealed, even by the vulgar, here are openly performed. When the King has made a hearty meal, and feels an inclination to retire, he commonly communicates that intention to the noblemen around him in waiting, and selects the favoured individuals whom, as a mark of predilection, he chooses shall attend him. 'Sono ben pransato,' says he, laying his hand on his belly, 'adesso bisogna un buona panchiata.' The persons thus preferred then accompany his Majesty, stand respectfully round him, and amuse him by their conversation during the performance."

However strong this fact may appear, and however repugnant to our ideas of decency, it has been for successive centuries perfectly consonant to the manners of the Italians in general, and scarcely less so to those of the French. D'Aubigné, a grave writer, in the "*Memoirs of his Own Life*," does not hesitate to relate, in the most circumstantial manner, the narrow escape which Henry IV., his master, had of being knocked on the head while engaged in this function. Nay, D'Aubigné composed a "*Quatrain*" on the adventure, which he has transmitted to posterity. The story is so naturally related, and is so characteristic of the nation, that I can't resist giving it in the words of the author. Henry, who was then only King of Navarre, having effected his escape from Paris in 1575, on which occasion D'Aubigné accompanied him, they passed the river Seine at Poissy, and soon afterwards stopped to refresh themselves in a village. Here, says D'Aubigné, the King, "*étant allé faire ses affaires dans un tet à cochons, une vieille, qui le surprit en cet état, lui auroit fendue la tête par derriere, d'un coup de serpe, sans moi qui parai le coup.*" It is clear

from this circumstance that D'Aubigné must have been close to his royal master at the time. Then follows the ludicrous epitaph which he made for the occasion, on a supposition that the old woman had killed the king :—

“ Cy git un roi, grand par merveille,  
Qui mourut comme Dieu permet,  
D'un coup de serpe d'une vieille,  
Ainsi qu'il chioit dans un tet.”

His predecessor, Henry III., it is well known, was stabbed in the belly, of which wound he died in 1589, while sitting on the *chaise-percée*, in which indecorous situation he did not scruple to give audience to Clement, the regicide monk, who assassinated him. Marshal Suwarrow, in our own time, received his aides-de-camp and his general officers precisely in a similar manner. Madame de Maintenon, as the Duke de St. Simon informs us, thought those moments so precious that she commonly accompanied Louis XIV. to the *garde-robe*. So did Louvois when Minister of State. The Duke de Vendôme, while commanding the armies of France in Spain and Italy, at the commencement of the last century, was accustomed to receive the greatest personages on public business in the same situation. We have Cardinal Alberoni's authority for this fact. If we read the account written by Du Bois of the last illness of Louis XIII., we may there see what humiliating functions Anne of Austria performed for that prince in the course of his malady, over which an English writer, more fastidious, would have drawn a veil. Made-moiselle de Montpensier and the Palatine Duchess of Orleans, though women of the highest birth and rank, as well as of unimpeached conduct, conceal nothing on these points in their writings. The former, speaking of the Duchess of Orleans, her

stepmother, second wife of Gaston, brother of Louis XIII., says, "She had contracted a singular habit of always running into another room '*pour se placer sur la chaise-percée*' when dinner was announced. As she never failed in this particular, the Grand Maître, or Lord Steward of Gaston's household, who performed the ceremony of summoning their Royal Highnesses to table, observed, smelling to his baton of office, that there must certainly be either senna or rhubarb in its composition, as it invariably produced the effect of sending the Duchess to the *garde-robe*." I have myself seen the late Electress Dowager of Saxony, daughter of the Emperor Charles VII., at her own palace, in the suburbs of Dresden, rise from the table where she was playing, when the room has been full of company of both sexes, lay down her cards, retire for a few minutes, during which time the game was suspended, and then return, observing to those near her, "*J'ai pris medecine aujourd'hui*." These facts sufficiently prove that Ferdinand, however gross his manners or language seem to us, by no means shocked the feelings or excited the disgust of his own courtiers.

"In all the exercises or exertions of the body that demand vigour and address," continued Sir William, "the King of Naples excels. He might have contended for the prize at the public games of ancient Greece at Elis or at Olympia, with no ordinary prospect of success. He likes, in particular, wrestling; and having heard that a young Irish gentleman of the name of Bourke, who visited Naples not long since, was an expert athlete, he caused it to be signified that he should like to try a fall with that foreigner; but Bourke had the good sense to decline a contest for the honours of the palæstra with a crowned head. He dances violently at the court

balls; on one of which occasions, some years ago, I witnessed a scene truly original as well as comic. When his brother-in-law, the Emperor Joseph, on his progress through Italy, arrived here, a superb ball was given in honour of his visit, at which entertainment, however, he declined mixing personally in the dance. While his Imperial Majesty was standing near the dancers engaged in conversation with me, Ferdinand having gone down the set, and being in a most profuse state of perspiration, pulled open his waistcoat, then taking Joseph's hand he applied it suddenly to his own shirt, exclaiming at the same time, 'Sentité qui, fratello mio.' The Emperor instantly withdrew his hand, not without manifesting great discomposure, and the two sovereigns remained for a few seconds looking in each other's faces. Surprise was equally painted in the features of both; for, as the one had never before been invited to try such an experiment, so the other had never found any individual who did not esteem himself honoured by the familiarity. I had no little difficulty to restrain the muscles of my countenance on the occasion.

"Joseph, who held his brother-in-law's understanding in great contempt, endeavoured to assume over him the sort of superiority arrogated by a strong over a weak mind. But Ferdinand, though confessedly his inferior in cultivation and refinement, was by no means disposed to adopt his political opinions or ideas. He even manifested in various conversations and on many occasions that, defective as his education had been, he possessed as much plain sense, and even native discernment, as the Emperor or his brother Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Joseph did not indeed inspire any very high admiration by his deportment or general conduct while he remained at Naples.

He was irritable and even irascible where he should have shown good-humour or command of temper. I accompanied him to the summit of Vesuvius, and with concern saw him break his cane over the shoulders of the guide, Bartolomeo, for some slight offence which he had given his Imperial Majesty.

“Ferdinand’s passions are all swallowed up in his rage for the pleasures of the field—hunting, shooting, and fishing—this last diversion, peculiarly adapted to the climate of Naples, must be included in the number. He thinks no fatigue and no privations too great to undergo for its indulgence. The quantity of game, by which I principally mean deer, wild boar of all ages, and stags of every kind, preserved in the royal woods or parks at Astruni, at Caserta, Caccia Bella, and other places, exceeds belief; and the slaughter made of them in some of the hunting-parties is equally beyond credibility. I have frequently seen a heap, composed only of the offal or bowels, reaching as high as my head, and many feet in circumference. The King rarely misses a shot; but when he is tired with killing, then commences another operation. He next dissects the principal pieces of game, which he presents to favoured courtiers, or distributes among his attendants. In order to perform this part of the diversion, having first stripped, he puts on a flannel dress, takes the knife in hand, and, with inconceivable dexterity, cuts up the animal. No carcase butcher in Smithfield can exceed him in anatomical ability; but he is frequently besmeared with blood from head to foot before he has finished, and exhibits an extraordinary spectacle, not easily to be imagined by those who have never witnessed it. The Queen herself is sometimes obliged to be present at the scene, though more, as may be supposed, in compliance with the King’s wish than from



her own inclination. He is equally indefatigable on the water in harpooning or in catching fish, particularly the *pesce spada* or sword-fish; and he neither regards heat, nor cold, nor hunger, nor danger. On these occasions he is usually or always attended by a number of chosen Liparots, natives of the Lipari islands, who have been in all ages most expert sailors, divers, and fishermen.

“It is thus that Ferdinand passes the greatest portion of his time, while the potentates of Germany, England, France, and Spain are engaged in war. Not that he is indifferent to the felicity of his subjects, or regardless of the security and prosperity of his dominions. On the contrary, his heart, which is animated with the best emotions towards his people, impels him to manifest it by all his measures; but his defects of education render him shy, embarrassed, and awkward, nor have his Ministers any wish to awaken or to invigorate the faculties of his mind. Neither Tanucci,<sup>1</sup> who governed Naples during his minority, nor Sambuca,<sup>2</sup> the present first Minister, desire to see him assume an active part in the administration of public affairs. The Chevalier Acton,<sup>3</sup> who is at the head of the marine, has however begun to put the Neapolitan navy in a more respectable condition than it has been for several centuries. Already it affords some protection to the coasts of Calabria and of Sicily, which have been perpetually infested by the Algerines, Tunisians, and other pirates, who were accustomed to land and to carry off whole villages into slavery,

<sup>1</sup> Bernardo, Marquis Tanucci, born in 1698, died in 1783. He was turned out of office by the influence of the Queen.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The Marquis de Sambuca was chosen by the Queen to succeed Tanucci, as one who would lend himself to her schemes.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Francis Edward Acton, Bart., born in 1736, commander-in-chief of the land and naval forces in the King of Naples' service, and also Prime Minister, died at Palermo in 1811.—ED.

precisely as Dragut and Barbarossa did two hundred years ago. Such calamities are even now by no means unusual. It is a fact that I narrowly escaped myself some time since, in one of my maritime excursions round the southern provinces of the kingdom, from being surprised in a speronara, while lying close under Cape Spartivento. Lady Hamilton was of the party, and those barbarians would not have respected my official character, nor still less would they have regarded the reclamations of this Government.

“The power of the Neapolitan kings is, moreover, fettered by many impediments, which even a prince of the greatest talents or of the most vigorous character would find difficult to surmount. In Apulia, as well as in Calabria and Sicily, the great feudal barons still retain privileges that render them almost independent of the crown, and which they consider as imprescriptible, having constituted their birthright for ages under the various dynasties, Norman, Suabian, Arragonese, and Austrian, that have reigned over this beautiful country. The Church enjoys revenues and immunities not less incompatible in many respects with civil order and obedience. But Ferdinand is greatly beloved by his people, who know and who do justice to his good intentions. He is even far more popular than the Queen. That princess, who possesses an active mind and very considerable talents, as well as ambition and love of power, has assumed a share in the administration, for which she is by no means unqualified; yet she is less esteemed than her husband, who, if he is not ardently attached to her as a wife, treats her at least with great consideration, kindness, and confidence. They live together in conjugal union, though her Majesty is not exempt from the frailties and weaknesses of her sex. In-

deed, the air, manners, and society of this capital are all very inimical to female virtue. From the time of the first Jane, Queen of Naples,<sup>1</sup> so famous in the annals of gallantry, down to the present day, these countries have exhibited scenes of dissolute pleasure, or rather of unrestrained licentiousness. Such they will probably ever remain. Yet," concluded Sir William, "if I were compelled to be a king, I would choose Naples for my kingdom. Here a crown has fewer thorns than in any other country. His very want of political power ensures his repose, and the storms which desolate Europe pass over his head without injury. Placed at the extremity of Italy, he is removed out of the way of contest and hostility. A delicious climate, shores to which the Romans retired, when masters of the world, in order to enjoy a luxury unattainable elsewhere, and which are still covered with the remains of Roman splendour or Grecian taste and magnificence, all the productions of the Levant, which are to be found here blended with those of the Mediterranean, a splendid capital, palaces, woods, game, everything seems assembled in this enchanting bay that can conduce to human enjoyment. Such is the favoured position and the enviable lot of Ferdinand IV." Such, indeed, as here described, it might be considered without exaggeration in 1779, though during the awful convulsions which have shaken Europe since that period produced by the French Revolution his throne was subverted and himself compelled to take refuge at Palermo during many years.<sup>2</sup>

The impunity with which the great nobility per-

<sup>1</sup> Joanna I., Queen of Naples, born 1326, succeeded her father, Charles of Sicily, at the age of nine. She had four husbands, and was put to death in 1382 by Charles de Duras, who succeeded her as Charles III.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> He was restored in 1814, and died of apoplexy in 1825.—ED.

petrated the most atrocious crimes, and the facility that they found in evading inquiry or in eluding justice, then constituted one of the worst features of the Neapolitan administration. The first Lady Hamilton, who had been several years resident at Naples, where she died not long afterwards, related to me various instances illustrative of this fact. "Some time ago," said she, "a Sicilian lady of high rank was by order of the court brought prisoner here from that island. She had committed so many assassinations or murders, that her own relations having denounced her, called on the Government to arrest the further course of her crimes. It was believed she had dispatched ten or eleven persons by the dagger or by poison, particularly by that species of poison denominated *aqua tophana*.<sup>1</sup> I had the curiosity to visit her during her confinement. She received me sitting in her bed, conversed with great cheerfulness, offered me chocolate as well as other refreshments, and seemed to labour under no agitation of mind. In her person she was delicate, feminine, and agreeable, her manner polite and gentle. Her age did not exceed three or four and twenty. From her deportment no one could have suspected her to be capable of such atrocities. Though her guilt was unquestionable, she was not put to death. Confinement for life in a convent of a severe monastic order, together with certain compulsory acts of religious mortification or penance, these constitute the punishments usually inflicted here on culprits of high birth."

<sup>1</sup> *Aqua tophania* (or *tufania*), an Italian poison, called after a Greek woman who employed it first, and introduced it in large quantities into Italy. On the 29th July 1717 Addison, as Secretary of State, addressed a letter to the Commissioners of Customs in England requiring them to take measures for checking the introduction of all poisoned liquors, of which the British Envoys at Naples and Genoa had sent home accounts.—ED.

The contiguity of the northern provinces of the kingdom of Naples to the Papal territories, and the ease with which malefactors of both countries respectively gained an asylum by passing the frontiers, opened another door to the commission of the most flagitious acts. Conversing at Portici on this subject with Lady Hamilton, she related to me the following story, which I shall endeavour to give in her own words. "About the year 1743 a person of the name of Ogilvie, an Irishman by birth, who practised surgery with great reputation at Rome, and who resided not far from the Piazza di Spagna in that city, being in bed, was called up to attend some strangers who demanded his professional assistance. They stopped before his house in a coach, and on his going to the door, he found two men masked, by whom he was desired to accompany them immediately, as the occasion which brought them admitted of no delay, and, in particular, not to omit taking with him his lancets. He complied, and got into the coach, but no sooner had they quitted the street in which he resided than they informed him that he must submit to have his eyes bandaged, the person to whom they were about to conduct him being a lady of rank, whose name and place of abode it was indispensable to conceal. To this requisition he likewise submitted; and, after driving through a number of streets, apparently with a view to prevent his forming any accurate idea of the part of the city to which he was conducted, the carriage at length stopped. The two gentlemen his companions then alighting, and each taking him by the arm, conducted him into a house. Ascending a narrow staircase, they entered an apartment, where he was released from the bandage tied over his eyes. One of them next acquainted him that it being necessary to deprive of life a lady who had dishonoured her family, they had

chosen him to perform the office, knowing his professional skill ; that he would find her in the adjoining chamber prepared to submit to her fate, and that he must open her veins with as much expedition as possible, a service for the execution of which he should receive a liberal recompense.

“Ogilvie at first peremptorily refused to commit an act so highly repugnant to his feelings. But the two strangers assured him, with solemn denunciations of vengeance, that his refusal could only prove fatal to himself without affording the slightest assistance to the object of his compassion ; that her doom was irrevocable, and that unless he chose to participate a similar fate, he must submit to execute the office imposed on him. Thus situated, and finding all entreaty or remonstrance vain, he entered the room, where he found a lady of a most interesting figure and appearance, apparently in the bloom of youth. She was habited in a loose undress, and immediately afterwards a female attendant placed before her a large tub filled with warm water, in which she immersed her legs. Far from opposing any impediment to the act which she knew he was sent to perform, the lady assured him of her perfect resignation, entreating him to put the sentence passed on her into execution with the least possible delay. She added that she was well aware no pardon could be expected from those who had devoted her to death, which alone could expiate her trespass, felicitating herself that his humanity would abbreviate her sufferings and soon terminate their duration.

“After a short conflict with his own mind, perceiving no means of extrication or of escape either for the lady or for himself, being moreover urged to expedite his work by the two persons without, who, impatient at his reluctance, threatened to exercise violence on him if he delayed, Ogilvie took out his

lancet, opened her veins, and bled her to death in a short time. The gentlemen having carefully examined the body in order to ascertain that she was no more, after expressing their satisfaction, offered him a purse of zechins as a remuneration, but he declined all recompense, only requesting to be conveyed from a scene on which he could not reflect without horror. With this entreaty they complied, and having again applied a bandage to his eyes, they led him down the same staircase to the carriage. But it being narrow, in descending the steps he contrived to leave on one or both of the walls, unperceived by his conductors, the marks of his fingers which were stained with blood. After observing precautions similar to those used in bringing him thither from his own house, he was conducted home, and at parting the two masks charged him, if he valued his life, never to divulge, and if possible never to think on, the past transaction. They added, that if he should embrace any measures with a view to render it public or to set on foot any inquiry into it, he should be infallibly immolated to their revenge. Having finally dismissed him at his own door, they drove off, leaving him to his reflections.

“On the subsequent morning, after great irresolution, he determined, at whatever risk to his personal safety, not to participate by concealing so enormous a crime. It formed, nevertheless, a delicate and difficult undertaking to substantiate the charge, as he remained altogether ignorant of the place to which he had been carried or of the name and quality of the lady whom he had deprived of life. Without suffering himself, however, to be deterred by these considerations, he waited on the Secretary of the Apostolic Chamber, and acquainted him with every particular, adding that if the Government would

extend to him protection, he did not despair of finding the house and of bringing to light the perpetrators of the deed. Benedict XIV. (Lambertini), who then occupied the Papal chair, had no sooner received the information than he immediately commenced the most active measures for discovering the offenders. A guard of the *sbirri* or officers of justice was appointed by his order to accompany Ogilvie, who, judging from various circumstances that he had been conveyed out of the city of Rome, began by visiting the villas constructed without the walls of that metropolis. His search proved ultimately successful. In the Villa Papa Julio, constructed by Pope Julius III. (Del Monté), he there found the bloody marks left on the wall by his fingers, at the same time that he recognised the apartment in which he had put to death the lady. The palace belonged to the Duke de Bracciano, the chief of which illustrious family and his brother had committed the murder in the person of their own sister. They no sooner found that it was discovered than they fled to this city, where they easily eluded the pursuit of justice. After remaining here for some time they obtained a pardon by the exertions of their powerful friends, on payment of a considerable fine to the Apostolic Chamber and under the further condition of affixing over the chimneypiece of the room where the crime had been perpetrated a plate of copper, commemorating the transaction and their penitence. This plate, together with the inscription, still continued to exist there till within these few years."

However extraordinary many circumstances of this story may appear, similar accounts have been circulated and believed in other countries of Europe. I have been assured at Vienna that an occurrence not less romantic and more enigmatical in its nature



took place in 1774 or 1775, for some uncertainty prevailed as to the precise time when the fact was pretended to have happened. It is well known that the *bourreau* or public executioner of the city of Strasburg, although that place has formed part of the French monarchy ever since the reign of Louis XIV., yet was frequently employed during a great part of the last century to perform the functions of his office on the other side of the Rhine, in Suabia, in the territories of Baden and in the Breisgau, all which countries constitute a portion of Germany. Some persons who arrived at Strasburg about the period to which I have alluded, having repaired, as it is said, to the house of the executioner during the night, demanded that he should instantly accompany them out of the town in order to execute a criminal of condition, for which service he should, of course, receive a liberal remuneration. They particularly enjoined him to bring the heavy two-edged sword with which he was accustomed, in the discharge of his ordinary functions, to behead malefactors. Being placed in a carriage with his conductors, he passed the bridge over the river to Kehl, the first town on the eastern bank of the Rhine, where they acquainted him that he had a considerable journey to perform, the object of which must be carefully concealed, as the person intended to be put to death was an individual of great distinction; they added, that he must not oppose their taking the proper precautions to prevent his knowing the place to which he was conveyed. He acquiesced, and allowed them to hoodwink him.

On the second day they arrived at a moated castle, the drawbridge of which being lowered for the purpose, they entered the court. After waiting a considerable time, he was then conducted into a spacious hall, where stood a scaffold hung with black cloth,

and in the centre was placed a stool or chair. A female shortly made her appearance, habited in deep mourning, her face wholly concealed by a veil. She was led by two persons, who, when she was seated, having first tied her hands, next fastened her legs with cords. As far as he could form any judgment from her general figure, he considered her to have passed the period of youth. Not a word was uttered; neither did she make any complaints, nor attempt any resistance. When all the preparations for her execution were completed, on a signal given he unsheathed the instrument of punishment, according to the practice adopted throughout the German Empire, where the axe is rarely or never used for decapitation; and her head being forcibly held up by the hair, he severed it at a single stroke from her body. Without allowing him to remain more than a few minutes, he was then handsomely rewarded, conducted back to Kehl by the same persons who had brought him to the place, and set down at the end of the bridge leading to Strasburg.

I have heard the question agitated during my residence in Germany, and many different opinions stated relative to the name and quality of the lady thus asserted to have been put to death. The most generally adopted belief rested on the Princess of Tour and Taxis, Augusta Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Alexander, Prince of Wirtemberg. She had been married at a very early period of life to Charles Anselm, Prince of Tour and Taxis. Whether it proceeded from mutual incompatibility of character, or, as was commonly pretended, from the Princess's intractable and ferocious disposition, the marriage proved eminently unfortunate in its results. She was accused of having repeatedly attempted to take away her husband's life, particularly while they were walking together near the castle of Donau-Stauff, on

the high bank overhanging the Danube, when, it was said, she endeavoured to precipitate him into the river. It is certain that about the year 1773 or 1774 a final separation took place between them, at the Prince's solicitation. The reigning Duke of Wirtemberg, her brother, to whose custody she was consigned, caused her to be closely immured in a castle within his own dominions. Of the last-mentioned fact there is little doubt; but it may be considered as much more problematical whether she was the person put to death by the executioner of Strasburg.

I dined in the autumn of the year 1778 with the Prince of Tour and Taxis at his castle or seat of Donau-Stauff, situate near the northern bank of the Danube, a few miles from the city of Ratisbon. He was then about forty-five years of age, and his wife was understood to be in confinement. I believe that her decease was not formally announced as having taken place till several years subsequent to 1778; but this circumstance by no means militates against the possibility of her having suffered by a more summary process, if her conduct had exposed her to merit it, and if it was thought proper to inflict upon her capital punishment. The private annals of the great houses and sovereigns of the German Empire, if they were divulged, would furnish numerous instances of similar severity exercised in their own families during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some of these stories might realise the tragical adventures commemorated by Boccace, or related by Margaret, Queen of Navarre, sister of Francis I., in her "*Tales*," which last-mentioned productions, however romantic or improbable many of them may appear, are not fictions, but faithful delineations of the gallantries or crimes that took place in the Court of Pau,

where she commonly resided, near the foot of the Pyrenees. Count Königsmark fell a victim at Hanover to the resentment of Ernest Augustus, father of King George I.; and we know how narrowly the great Frederick, afterwards King of Prussia, escaped perishing by the same weapon which beheaded his companion, Katt, arbitrarily sacrificed by Frederick-William I., for only endeavouring to facilitate the Prince's evasion from his father's court.

While I am engaged on the subject of extraordinary events, I shall record one more fact, which may appear equally curious with either of the stories that I have just recounted. During the first winter that I passed at Vienna, in 1778, I became acquainted with Count Podotski and his countess. She was one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of high rank whom I have seen on the Continent. Her husband, a great Polish nobleman, hereditary cupbearer or *grand Echanson* of the crown, had become in some measure an Austrian subject in consequence of the first partition of Poland, which took place in 1772. His patrimonial estates lying principally in that southern portion of the kingdom which fell to the share of Maria Theresa, he of course repaired frequently to Vienna, between which capital and Warsaw he divided his time. During the winter of 1776, as the Count and Countess were on their road from Vienna to Cracow, the wolves, which abound in the Carpathian Mountains, rendered more than ordinarily bold and ferocious in consequence of the severity of the season, descending in great numbers, began to follow the carriage between the two little towns of Oswiezk and Zator, the latter of which places is only a few leagues distant from Cracow. Of two servants who attended him, one had been sent for-

ward to Zator for the purpose of procuring post-horses. The other, a Heyduc, to whom he was much attached on account of his fidelity, finding the wolves rapidly gaining ground on them, rode up and exhorted the Count to permit him to abandon to these animals his horse, as such a prey would naturally arrest their impetuosity and allow time for the Count and Countess to reach Zator. Podotski immediately agreed to the proposal, and the Heyduc, mounting behind the carriage, left his horse, who was soon overtaken, and torn in a thousand pieces.

They continued their journey meanwhile with all possible speed in the hope of getting to the town, which was at an inconsiderable distance. But their horses were fatigued, and the wolves, become ravenous as well as eager by having tasted blood, already were nearly up with them. In this extremity, the Heyduc said to his master, "There is only one way left to save us. We shall all be devoured in a few minutes. I am ready to sacrifice myself by going to meet the wolves, if you will swear to be a father to my wife and children. I shall be destroyed, but while they are occupied in falling upon me, you may escape." Podotski, after a moment's reluctance to accept such an offer, pressed nevertheless by the prospect of imminent destruction to them all, while he saw no chance of any other means of extrication, consented, and assured him that if he were capable of devoting himself for their common preservation, his family should find in him a constant protector. The Heyduc, instantly descending, advanced to meet the wolves, who surrounded and soon dispatched him. But his magnanimous sacrifice of himself, by checking the ardour of their pursuit, allowed Count Podotski time to reach the gates of Zator in safety. I

ought not to omit that the Heyduc was a Dissident or Protestant, while his master professed the Catholic religion, a circumstance which greatly added to the merit and effect of the sacrifice. I believe that Count Podotski most religiously fulfilled his engagement to befriend the family of his faithful servant. For the honour of human nature we ought not to suppose it possible that he could fail on such a point. I cannot say that I have heard him relate this story himself, but I have received it from those persons who knew its authenticity, and who recounted it to me at Vienna while the Count was engaged in the same room at play in the hôtel of the French Ambassador, the Baron de Breteuil, only about two years after it took place. An instance of more prompt, cool, and generous self-devotion is perhaps not to be found in the history of mankind, nor ought its value to be in any degree diminished by the consideration that even if the Heyduc had not acted as he did, they must all probably or certainly have perished together.

If Naples in 1779 offered a number of enchanting objects to the imagination and the senses, Florence, where I likewise passed a considerable time in the same year, presented others not less captivating to the mind. The Palazzo Vecchio, once inhabited by the elder Cosmo and by Lorenzo de Medici, names which have attained so much celebrity; the Chapel of St. Lorenzo, where reposed the remains of various princes or individuals of that illustrious family, whose monuments were adorned by the hand of Michael Angelo; the gallery constructed for the reception of all those masterpieces of ancient and of modern genius, which taste had collected in the lapse of ages; even the surrounding scenery, the river Arno, Fiesolè, Vallombrosa, and every object,

awakened classic or poetic recollections. Sir Horace Mann, who was then the British Minister at the Court of Tuscany, had long outlived the extinction of the House of Medici, for which race of princes he seemed to preserve the same predilection which Brantôme always manifests for the family of Valois above the line of Bourbon. He remembered, and personally knew, the last Grand Duke of the Medician line, John Gaston, in consequence of whose decease, in 1737, without issue, those beautiful portions of Italy constituting his dominions were finally transferred to a prince of Lorraine.

Conversing with Sir Horace Mann on this topic, which always excited his regret, "John Gaston," observed he to me, "was one of the most accomplished men whom the present century has witnessed, if his immoderate pursuit of pleasure had not enervated his mind and debilitated his frame. He became, long before his death, incapable of continuing his family, but that inability did not produce its extinction. A fatality seemed to overhang the House of Medici, and to render ineffectual all the measures adopted for its prolongation. When it became perfectly ascertained that John Gaston could not perpetuate his line, the Cardinal Francesco-Maria, his uncle, was selected for that purpose in 1709, a dispensation from his ecclesiastical vows being previously obtained from the Papal See. The only and the indispensable object of the marriage being the attainment of heirs-male to the Grand Duchy, in order to prevent its seizure by foreign violence, or its incorporation with the Austrian, French, or Spanish monarchies, all Italy was searched with the view of finding a young and handsome princess, from whom might be expected a numerous family. A princess of

Guastalla, on whom the selection fell, seemed to unite every requisite qualification. The nuptials were solemnised; and the bridegroom being of a feeble constitution, as well as rather advanced in life, it was plainly insinuated to the lady that, for reasons of state necessity connected with the very political existence of Tuscany under the reigning house, she must produce an heir. The most agreeable youths and pages about the court were purposely thrown in her way, every facility being furnished that might conduce to the accomplishment of the object. But so sacredly did she observe the marriage vow, that no seductions could make an impression on her. Francesco-Maria died within two years, of the same distemper which carried off Louis XII.; and no sooner had that event taken place, than his widow, who had surmounted every temptation to inconstancy during his life, gave the reins to her inclinations, and brought into the world two or three children. France having acquired Lorraine, and Don Carlos being made sovereign of Naples, Tuscany was delivered over as a forfeited province to Francis, Duke of Lorraine. It was thus that Florence, the repository of so many invaluable monuments of Greek and Roman workmanship, collected during successive centuries by the princes of Medici, together with the dependent territories, passed into the Austrian family." Sir Horace little foresaw at that time the new and more calamitous revolutions impending over Tuscany, as consequences of the French Revolution.

That charming country, the cradle of the fine arts, enjoyed in 1779, under the mild and parental government of the Grand Duke Leopold, a high degree of felicity as well as prosperity, perhaps more than at any period of its history, either when a Common-



wealth or under the administration of the House of Medici. While his father, the Emperor Francis, retained the sovereignty of Tuscany, it was considered by him only as a detached province of the Austrian monarchy, which he rarely visited, the internal control of which he committed almost exclusively to Germans. But with the accession of Leopold as Grand Duke, Florence assumed a new aspect; and though he occasionally repaired to Vienna in order to pay his duty to the Empress Maria Theresa, his mother, yet he was not partial to the climate or manners of Austria. He loved the banks of the Arno far more than those of the Danube; dividing his time between the occupations of civil government, the education of his numerous family, which he superintended in person with great care, and the researches of natural philosophy, particularly chemistry, for which last-mentioned pursuit, like the Emperor Francis, he nourished a strong predilection. In imitation of other royal philosophers, ancient and modern, with the single illustrious exceptions, I believe, of the great Frederick, King of Prussia, and of Charles XII. of Sweden, he sought in the gratifications of female society the best relief from the toils and cares of state. An English lady, the Countess Cowper,<sup>1</sup> became at this time distinguished by his attachment, and the exertion of his interest with Joseph II., his brother, procured her husband, Earl Cowper, to be created soon afterwards a prince of the German Empire—an honour which, I believe, had not been conferred on any British subject since the beginning of the last century, when John Churchill, the great Duke of Marlborough, was

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Piozzi's note on this is: "She was beautiful when no longer a court favourite in 1786. Her attachment was then to Mr. Merry, the highly accomplished poet, known afterwards by the name of Della Crusca."—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, by A. Hayward, i. 330.—ED.

raised to the dignity of Prince of Mindelheim by the Emperor Joseph I., after the memorable victory of Blenheim.

While I am engaged on the subject of the two brothers, Joseph and Leopold, who were successively Emperors of Germany as well as Kings of Hungary and Bohemia, I shall make a few observations relative to both these princes. The reign of Joseph, comprising more than nine years, from November 1780 to February 1790, may be considered as one of the most unfortunate and injurious in its effects to the House of Austria which occurs in the annals of that family. He possessed, nevertheless, many eminent virtues, activity, frugality, enlargement of mind, facility of access, indefatigable application, great renunciation of pleasure, the desire of acquiring knowledge and of ameliorating the condition of his people; but he was theoretical, of an irritable temper, precipitate, ambitious, despotic, and led astray by his anxiety to appear, like his contemporary Frederick II., King of Prussia, his own commander-in-chief and Prime Minister. That great prince whom I have last named became himself on more than one occasion during the "Seven Years War," as is well known, the victim of his temerity or pertinacity in rejecting the advice of his generals. Joseph attempted, with far inferior talents, to conduct military operations, but disaster perpetually attended him in the field. Laudohn was reduced to the necessity of forcing him to quit the camp in Lower Hungary during the war carried on against the Turks, and his arms never penetrated beyond the Danube into Servia, till he left the army and retired to Vienna. His alliance with Catherine II., and his visits to the Crimea in her company, of which romantic journeys the Prince de Ligne has given us such amusing details, produced no permanent

advantage to his crown or real benefit to his people. We know that he had actually made with the Russian Empress a partition of all the European portion of the Turkish dominions, and of some of the Asiatic provinces lying along the shore of the Black Sea, but the two sovereigns found it easier to divide Poland than to dismember Turkey. Joseph's imprudent, arbitrary, and impolitic infractions of the privileges or constitutional rights of his Flemish subjects, when aggravated by his suppression of many of the monastic establishments, produced a dangerous fermentation approaching to insurrection among the Hungarians and throughout the Austrian Netherlands. While he fondly anticipated the conquest of the Ottoman provinces beyond Belgrade, which Prince Eugene had subjected to Charles VI. seventy years earlier, the Hungarians opened a secret negotiation of the most dangerous nature with the Court of Berlin, and the Flenings overturned the Imperial Government at Brussels. Even the Archduchy of Austria and the kingdom of Bohemia manifested symptoms of disaffection; while the French Revolution, which had commenced in the summer of 1789, advancing with gigantic steps towards democracy, anarchy, and external violence, painfully attracted his attention on that vulnerable quarter, which he had imprudently dismantled and laid open to invasion. Such was the critical and convulsed state of the Austrian monarchy when Joseph expired at Vienna in the spring of 1790, at the age of forty-nine, leaving no issue that survived him by either of his wives, but extenuated by diseases, caused or accelerated in their progress by his own irritability of temper, agitation of mind, and the augmenting embarrassment of his affairs.

Leopold, who succeeded him, and who was unquestionably a prince of deep reflection, enlarged

capacity, and sound judgment, perceived the misfortunes which had flowed from the spirit of innovation, reform, and restless activity or ambition that had characterised his brother. But it was not easy for him to withdraw from the political connections formed by Joseph with the Empress Catherine. Yet, alarmed at the state of Flanders and of Hungary, while he dreaded the issue of the revolutionary struggle in which his brother-in-law, Louis XVI., was involved with his subjects, Leopold, after many doubts and much hesitation, finally determined to dissolve the alliance with Russia. A circumstance which took place not long after his accession confirmed him in the resolution. Potemkin,<sup>1</sup> who then commanded the armies of his imperial mistress in the vicinity of Oczakow, on the coast of the Black Sea, pushed his conquests against the Turks so far to the westward in Moldavia and Wallachia as to approach the Austrian frontier in Servia on the Lower Danube. Uneasy at the advances of such a neighbour, the Emperor addressed a letter to him, couched in very obliging language, but intimating his Imperial Majesty's wishes that he would desist from prosecuting his advantages any farther on that side. Potemkin, intoxicated with favour, brutal in his manner, insolent, and restrained by no considerations of policy or of respect for the dignity of the writer, had the audacity to throw the letter on the ground in the presence of various persons, to spit upon it, and to trample it under foot, adding the most injurious or insulting epithets relative personally to Leopold. These barbarous and impolitic ebullitions of his rage were reported soon afterwards to the Emperor by Foscari,<sup>2</sup> the Venetian Amba-

<sup>1</sup> Gregorii Alexandrovich, Prince Potemkin, born at Smolensko in 1736, and died in 1791.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Francesco Foscari, Venetian senator and statesman, born in 1704, died in 1790.—ED.

sador at the Court of Petersburg, who, having returned to Venice, and there meeting his Imperial Majesty, acquainted him with the facts. Leopold heard the narration with great apparent calmness, but such an insult did not make the less deep impression on his mind. We may however conclude that before Potemkin would have ventured on so outrageous an act of contempt towards his sovereign's most powerful ally, he had good reason to believe that the existing ties between the two courts were about to be dissolved and new alliances preparing to be formed by Austria.

In fact, Leopold from an early period of his reign turned all his views towards the two Courts of Berlin and of London. After concluding a treaty at Reichenbach with the King of Prussia, he made peace with the Turks at Sistova, wisely renouncing all his brother Joseph's conquests in Bosnia and Servia, restoring Belgrade to the Porte, and abandoning his connections with Catherine. Impelled by an anxious desire of arresting the course of those French revolutionary principles which he foresaw would, if not checked, eventually involve Europe in the greatest calamities, he planned the celebrated interview of Pilnitz. In the summer of 1791, having repaired with his eldest son, the present Emperor Francis, to the castle or hunting-seat of that name, belonging to the Elector of Saxony, situate near Dresden, Frederick-William, accompanied in like manner by his future successor, the reigning King of Prussia, there met Leopold. Their conference led to a treaty which adopted as its fundamental basis the resolution "not to make war on France, but to arm against the introduction of French revolutionary principles into Germany and the Low Countries." The Emperor, who had formed an opinion, to which he systematically ad-

hered, that the Republican faction in Paris would only be aided by aggression and hostility, thought that war must therefore be avoided; but he conceived that the great powers of Europe should arm against French principles by forming a military cordon round France, thus shutting in, if I may so express myself, the moral or political infection, and leaving them to exhaust their democratic rage on each other.

Such was the unquestionable object and scope of that memorable Treaty of Pilnitz, relative to which so much has been said or written within the last twenty years, and whose very existence has been called in question. How far the plan might have proved efficacious, if it had been generally adopted by all the Germanic body as early as 1791, and if Leopold, who framed it, had lived to conduct its operations, it is difficult to venture a decided opinion; but for the authenticity of the fact itself, I think I may challenge contradiction. Perhaps moral and political principles are not to be shut in by any defensive precautions which can be adopted by human wisdom. I am fully convinced that when Pitt early in 1793 declared open hostility on France, he could not have saved England by temporising measures. Nay, I then thought, and I continue so to think now, after the lapse of more than twenty years, that Fox would have formed the same estimate, and would have acted precisely in the same manner, if he had been seated as first Minister on the Treasury bench. The whole difference in their mode of seeing and appreciating the tendency of the French Revolution lay in the possession or the negation of political power. Indeed, the fact was practically proved when Fox, after Pitt's decease in 1806, arrived at employment. It soon became evident how much his attainment of a seat in the Cabinet

had illuminated his understanding as well as invigorated his measures in opposition to revolutionary principles and their consequences. Fox's masterly speech on the cession of the two Margravates of Anspach and Bareith to Bavaria by Frederick-William, King of Prussia, and his acceptance of Hanover from Bonaparte as a compensation, sufficiently demonstrated that he then saw through the optics of Pitt and Burke. The present Earl of Chatham,<sup>1</sup> if he had been seated under the gallery at the time, might have exclaimed with Isabella in "Measure for Measure," on hearing the Secretary's harangue, "There spake my brother. There my father's grave did utter forth a voice!"

I return to Leopold. So anxious was he to form a defensive league against the French Republican contagion, that on the very day succeeding his coronation at Frankfort as Emperor of Germany, in the autumn of 1790, he dispatched an agent whom I well knew, and who is still living, to the Court of Berlin, empowered to open a private negotiation with Frederick-William. It was confined personally to the two sovereigns, their respective first Ministers, Kaunitz and Hertzberg, being wholly excluded from any knowledge of the transaction. The King of Prussia, who came readily into Leopold's views, employed Bischoffswerder, his confidential friend, to carry back his assent. But no final or effectual measures, as they well knew, could be settled without the participation of England. Pitt and Lord Grenville entered ardently into the plan, which had principally in view two objects—to arrest the arms of Catherine on the

<sup>1</sup> John, son of the first and great Earl of Chatham, whom he succeeded in 1788.—D.

shores of the Euxine, and to coerce the Republicans of Paris without making offensive war on France. The former of these points would unquestionably have been attained if Fox had not excited so formidable an opposition in the House of Commons as compelled the Ministry reluctantly to recede from their engagements. He at the same time sent Mr. Adair,<sup>1</sup> as his own private agent, to Petersburg, an act for which many persons thought that he deserved impeachment far more than Hastings merited prosecution on account of his administration while Governor-General of India. Leopold, apprehensive of Catherine's resentment, and doubtful of Pitt's and Lord Grenville's sincerity, nor without alarm at the murmurs which he foresaw would arise among his own troops on the evacuation of Belgrade<sup>2</sup> and the restitution of his Turkish conquests, said to a gentleman, a native of Great Britain, with whom he was accustomed to unbosom his thoughts, and who had formed the medium of his intercourse with Frederick-William, I mean the late Sir John Macpherson, "*J'ai signé la paix avec les Turcs, mais la Grand Bretagne est elle sincère? Me tiendra-t-elle ses engagements? Catherine sera inexorable. Je l'ai vu en songe, hier, la nuit, le poignard à la main.*" He even disapproved and lamented the policy adopted by Pitt towards the Empress in the business of Oczakow, as severe, irritating, and calculated to render her implacable. "Why," observed Leopold, speaking to the same friend, "rob the Empress of her laurels and humiliate her in the

<sup>1</sup> Robert Adair, born May 24, 1763, became acquainted with Fox in 1780, and was sent in 1806 as Minister to Vienna by that statesman. In 1809 he was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. He died October 3, 1855.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Belgrade was taken from the Turks in 1789, and restored at the peace of Reichenbach in 1790.—ED.



eyes of Europe? It is necessary that her head should be encircled with glory in order to hide her feet, which are stained with blood." In fact, Catherine, who never forgave either Austria, Prussia, or England, for their conduct towards her, propelled those powers to commence war on France in 1792, but she extended no assistance to them in the prosecution of the contest. On the contrary, by attacking Poland, she compelled Frederick-William to withdraw from the great alliance and to return into Germany. "If," said the King, addressing himself to the distinguished individual already alluded to, "I had not marched my army back into my own dominions, she would not only have taken Warsaw, but would have entered Berlin likewise with her troops." It was Russia, therefore, which acted as one great cause of the overthrow of the first confederacy formed against Republican France.

During the autumn of the year 1791, Leopold, being on his way from Vienna to Florence, stopped for the purpose of refreshment at a small post-house in the Duchy of Styria, where, while he remained, a crowd of his own subjects pressed round to look at him. Among them he remarked an old woman, who, when he got into his carriage, approached it, and knocking against the glass with her hands, addressed some words to him in a tone of great violence and asperity, accompanied with gestures indicative of resentment; but as she spoke in the Styrian dialect, he was wholly unable to comprehend her meaning. Apprehending that she might have some complaint to prefer, or might have received some injury demanding redress, he ordered his attendants to question her on the subject of her application. They manifested considerable reluctance in explaining to him its nature, but on his

insisting to be informed, one of them answered that she said, "Render justice promptly. We know all that the Poissardes have done at Paris." The Emperor made no reply, but when he recounted the story to the gentleman who related it to me, and to whom he was used to speak without reserve, he added, "You may suppose that I have read and reflected much upon the French Revolution and its consequences, but all that has been said or can be written upon it never carried such conviction to my mind as the few words uttered by the old woman in Styria." They forcibly remind us of the female who observed to Alexander the Great, that if he was not at leisure to hear abuses and to redress grievances, why did he reign?

Notwithstanding all the efforts made by the emigrants for inducing Leopold to commence war with France, he remained inflexibly steady to his system of arming against the Revolution, but of never attacking the French nation. It was not till after his decease that, under Francis, his successor, in the summer of 1792, the Austrians entered Champagne in conjunction with the Prussian forces. Leopold's death took place on the first day of March that same year at Prague, to which city he had repaired for the purpose of being there crowned King of Bohemia. I think I may venture to assert with confidence that he was poisoned, and that the poison was administered in confectionery which a lady presented him at a masquerade. Every endeavour was exerted to conceal the fact, and with that view it was pretended that his end had been produced by some drugs or incentives which he himself prepared in his own laboratory, for he passed much time in chemical researches and processes. But Agusius, his physician, who opened

his body, did not entertain any doubt that he fell a victim to poison.<sup>1</sup>

During the spring of the year 1798, chancing to be alone with a foreign nobleman in London, whose name I do not think proper to mention, he being still alive, but whose veracity was unquestionable, and who having been the Ambassador of a crowned head at the Court of Vienna when Leopold's death happened, must have possessed the best means of obtaining information, I ventured to interrogate him on the subject. "I was accustomed," answered he, "during the last year of the Emperor's life to see him frequently, and to have long audiences of him on business in his closet. During these interviews, I beheld him divested of any disguise, and I can pronounce, as a matter of certainty, that the force of his mind was then altogether broken and his faculties enfeebled. His memory in particular had become so weakened, that he could no longer retain from one day to another the facts committed to it. He rarely recollected the conversation of the preceding morning. This premature decay of his intellectual powers resulted from his licentious excesses, which he continued to indulge when destructive to his frame. The brain was particularly affected. In my audiences of Leopold, he always walked up and down the apartment during the whole time. On his table lay a number of rolls of wax, which he bit from one minute to another, spitting out the pieces on the floor. When he quitted the room, whether any other persons were present, or whether we were alone, he never advanced forward in a straight line, but he went round

<sup>1</sup> Coxe ("House of Austria") says he died after three days' illness of "malignant dysentery," and the same writer adds that there was no "apparent foundation" for the report that the Emperor was poisoned.—D.

the sides of the chamber touching with his hand the wainscot or the window shutters. No circumstances could more strongly indicate a disordered or enfeebled understanding. As to the nature of his death, I am unable positively to pronounce upon the fact. Certainly his body when opened exhibited every mark of poison. But if he was poisoned, by whom was it administered, or with what object, I cannot pretend to guess, nor even to form a conjecture." Two opinions, as I have been assured, prevailed at Prague respecting it, both of which were alike founded on Leopold's well-known determination not to engage in a war with France. One party maintained that the Girondists, which faction then predominated at Paris, dreading the effects of his defensive system as most injurious to their tenure of power, removed him in the manner related; while another party accused the emigrants of having produced his death, as the only means left them of regaining their property by forcing an immediate rupture between the Austrian and French Governments. I must leave the fact problematical. Time, however, will probably elucidate its nature.

Among the objects of mingled curiosity and compassion which Florence presented in 1779 to the view of an Englishman was the Chevalier de St. George, or, as we commonly denominate him, the *Pretender*. It was impossible to contemplate him without making many reflections on his own destiny, and on the condition of the infatuated family of which he was the representative. Neither ancient nor modern history presents the example of a line of princes so eminently unfortunate during a succession of ages. The calamities which overwhelmed the House of Bourbon, awful as they must be esteemed, have been comprised within the space of

five and twenty years; but, from James I. of Scotland, murdered in the most inhuman manner at Perth in 1437, down to the last of his descendants, with only the two exceptions of James I. of England and Charles II., all the others perished by the hand of the executioner, or by violent and premature death, or died in exile maintained by foreign contributions. It was not, however, merely when considered as the grandson of James II., and the inheritor of the pretensions of the Stuarts, that the Chevalier de St. George excited an interest in the mind of every reflecting spectator. By his mother he descended from the celebrated John Sobieski, King of Poland, who was his maternal great-grandfather; the first Chevalier de St. George, son of James II., having carried off from Innsbruck about the year 1719 and married Clementina Sobieska,<sup>1</sup> daughter and heiress of Prince James Sobieski, whom Charles XII., King of Sweden, meditated some years earlier to have placed on the Polish throne. In right of that princess her son succeeded to very considerable patrimonial estates situated in Poland, the produce of which formed a much more solid source of support than the precarious allowance or donations, made and withdrawn as circumstances impelled, by the French and Spanish Crowns or by the Apostolic See. Clement XIV. (Ganganelli), when he refused to continue to the Chevalier the public honours previously enjoyed by his father and himself at Rome, where a canopy, decorated with the royal arms of Great Britain, was erected over their box in the theatre, retrenched

<sup>1</sup> Maria Clementina Sobieska, grand-daughter of John Sobieski, King of Poland. The Court of Vienna objected to the marriage, and she was taken prisoner on her way through Tyrol to Italy. She escaped from Innsbruck in man's clothes, and went to Bologna, where she was married by proxy to the Pretender, who was in Spain. She died in 1725.—ED.

likewise the pecuniary appointments antecedently paid him out of the treasury of St. Peter. Nor do I believe that they were restored by Pius VI. after his election to the Papal Chair in 1775; but the Pretender's income at the time of which I speak might be estimated at more than five thousand pounds sterling, a sum fully adequate at Florence to maintain an establishment becoming his situation.<sup>1</sup>

His faculties, even in their zenith, appear to have been very moderate, but his valour, though not heroic, was never, I believe, called in question by the Scots during his campaign in 1745 and 1746. Charles II.'s courage had been doubted in 1652 at the battle of Worcester, as James II.'s military ardour was questioned on various occasions while Lord High Admiral during the two Dutch wars under his brother's reign. Charles I. is indeed the only prince of the Stuart race, after their accession to the English throne, whose bravery, conspicuously displayed at Edgehill, at Newbury, at Naseby, and in many other battles or encounters during the course of the civil war, equally sustained him in the last act of his life on the scaffold. In 1779 Charles Edward exhibited to the world a very humiliating spectacle.<sup>2</sup> At the theatre, which he

<sup>1</sup> The picture given by Dr. William King of the Pretender is very uncomplimentary. He writes:—"But the most odious part of his character is his love of money, a vice which I do not remember to have been imputed by our historians to any of his ancestors, and is the certain index of a base and little mind." The defection of the most powerful of his friends and adherents in England was caused by his obstinacy in retaining his mistress, Mrs. Walkinshaw, whose sister was housekeeper at Leicester House. This woman was trusted with his most secret correspondence, and his followers naturally felt that this was a source of serious danger to them, and imagined that she was placed in his family by the British Ministers. A full account of the causes of this defection will be found in Dr. King's "Political and Literary Anecdotes of his Own Times," 1819, pp. 197-214.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Piozzi remarks on this:—"Still more so in 1786. Count Alfieri had taken away his consort, and he was under the dominion

attended almost every evening, his domestics laid him on a sofa in the back part of his box, while the Countess d'Albany, his consort,<sup>1</sup> occupied the front seat during the whole performance. Count Alfieri,<sup>2</sup> a man singularly eccentric in his mind, habits, and manners, whose Memoirs of his own life, composed by himself, furnish abundant proofs of original genius, and whose dramatic productions breathe the hardihood of antiquity sustained by an unconquerable love of civil liberty, always attended on her in public as her *cavalier servente*, according to the established usages of society at that time throughout Italy.<sup>3</sup> As, for obvious reasons, English subjects could not be presented to a man who still laid claim to the British crown, no opportunity of distinctly seeing the Chevalier de St. George offered itself except across the theatre, and even there he lay concealed, as I have already observed, on account of his infirmities, rarely coming forward to view.<sup>4</sup>

and care of a natural daughter, who wore the Garter, and was called Duchess of Albany. She checked him when he drank too much or when he talked too much. Poor soul! Though one evening he called Mr. Greathead up to him and said in good English, and loud though cracked voice, 'I will speak to my own subjects my own way, *sare*, and I will soon speak to you, sir, in Westminster Hall,' the Duchess shrugged her shoulders."—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, by A. Hayward, i. 331.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Louisa Maximiliana, Princess of Stolberg-Gödern, Countess of Albany, born at Mons in 1753, married in 1772 to Charles James Edward, grandson of James II. (the young Pretender). After his death in 1788, she was secretly married to Alfieri. She died 29th January 1824.

<sup>2</sup> Vittoria Alfieri, born at Asti, January 17, 1749, died October 8, 1803.

<sup>3</sup> Alfieri subsequently carried off the Countess, with whom he lived till his death. The Pretender in his beastly drunken fits used to beat her, throttle her, and tear her hair. To such ungallant practices had fallen the prince of whom ladies were wont to sing, "Charlie is my darling, the young Chevalier."—D.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Bates, M.D., of Missenden, Bucks, was introduced to him, and recalled to his recollection his taking much notice of a little boy in the house in which he was quartered at Derby during the Rebellion. The Chevalier said he remembered the circumstance perfectly, and,

Being desirous, therefore, to obtain a more accurate idea of his face and person than could be acquired at such a distance, I took my station one evening at the head of a private staircase, near the door by which, when the performance closed, he quitted the playhouse. Previous to my leaving England in 1777 his Majesty had been pleased, at the application of Lord Robert Manners, who then commanded the 3rd Regiment of Dragoon Guards, to give me a lieutenant's commission; and Lord Robert had allowed me to wear his uniform, which I had on at the time. The present General Manners, now first equerry to the King, and who has represented the town of Cambridge in Parliament for a great number of years, then a cornet in his father's regiment, dressed in the same uniform, and actuated by a similar curiosity, accompanied me. As soon as the Chevalier approached near enough to distinguish the English regimentals, he instantly stopped, gently shook off the two servants who supported him one on each side, and taking off his hat, politely saluted us. He then passed on to his carriage, sustained by the two attendants as he descended the staircase. I could not help as I looked at him recollecting the series of dangers and escapes which he underwent or effected during successive months among the Hebrides after his defeat at Culloden,—a chain of adventures which has no parallel among modern nations except in those equally extraordinary hardships which distinguished the flight of Charles II. from Worcester, or in the romantic extremities to which Stanislaus Leczinski, King of Poland, was reduced in 1734

on the Doctor's acquainting him that he himself was that boy, he took from his finger a cameo ring which he presented him. This the Doctor himself, who lived to an advanced age at Missenden, was in the habit of telling his friends.—ED.



after his evasion and flight from Dantzic. Mrs. Lane gave to the former of those princes the same noble proofs of disinterested devotion which Flora Macdonald displayed towards the Pretender; and both were eminently indebted for their final preservation to female honour or loyalty. Charles Edward's complexion was dark, and he manifestly bore the same family resemblance to his grandfather, James II., that his Britannic Majesty's countenance presents to George I. or to the late King. On the occasion just related he wore, besides the decorations of the order of the Garter, a velvet greatcoat, which his infirm health rendered necessary even in summer on coming out of the theatre, and a cocked hat, the sides of which were half drawn up with gold twist. His whole figure, paralytic and debilitated, presented the appearance of great bodily decay.

The strength of his mind had likewise become extinct at this time; and with the decline of his intellectual powers, the suavity of his temper forsaking him, he became irritable, morose, and intractable, particularly in his family. An unhappy propensity to wine,<sup>1</sup> which he gratified to excess, while it enervated his system, rendered him frequently an object of pity or of contempt when in public, divesting him of that dignity which would otherwise have always accompanied the descendant and representative of so many kings. His misfortunes, exile, and anomalous situation, aggravated by mortifications of various kinds which he had undergone both at France and at Rome, probably induced him to have recourse to the grape for procuring oblivion or

<sup>1</sup> Dr. King says that he and his mistress, Mrs. Walkinshaw, were both given to drinking. "They often quarrelled, and sometimes fought; it was some of these drunken scenes which probably occasioned the report of his madness."—*King's "Anecdotes of his Own Times,"* p. 208 (note).—ED.

dispensing temporary felicity. That melancholy indulgence extinguished the last hope which fortune ever tendered him of ascending the throne of England, justly forfeited by the tyranny and imbecile bigotry of James II.

I know from high authority that as late as the year 1770 the Duke de Choiseul,<sup>1</sup> then first Minister of France, not deterred by the ill success of the attempts made in 1707, in 1715, and in 1745, meditated another effort for restoring the house of Stuart. His enterprising spirit led him to profit by the dispute which arose between the English and Spanish crowns respecting the possession of the Falkland Islands. In order to accomplish the object, as the first step necessary towards it, he dispatched a private emissary to Rome, who signified to Charles Edward the Duke's desire of seeing him immediately at Paris. He complied, and arrived in that city with the utmost privacy. Having announced it to Choiseul, the Minister fixed the same night at twelve o'clock, when he and the Marshal de Broglio<sup>2</sup> would be ready to receive the Pretender, and to lay before him their plan for an invasion of England. The Hôtel de Choiseul was named for the interview, to which place he was enjoined to repair in a hackney-coach, disguised, and without any attendant. At the appointed time the Duke and the Marshal, furnished with the requisite papers and instructions drawn up for his conduct on the projected expedition, were ready; but after waiting a full hour, expecting his appearance every instant, when the clock struck one, they concluded that some unforeseen accident must have intervened to

<sup>1</sup> Stephen François, Duc de Choiseul, died in 1785, aged sixty-six. —ED.

<sup>2</sup> Count de Broglio, who distinguished himself in the Seven Years' War. His father and grandfather had also been Marshals of France. —ED.

prevent his arrival. Under this impression they were preparing to separate, when the noise of wheels was heard in the courtyard, and a few moments afterwards the Pretender entered the room in a state of such intoxication as to be utterly incapable even of ordinary conversation. Disgusted as well as indignant at this disgraceful conduct, and well convinced that no expedition undertaken for the restoration of a man so lost to every sense of decency or self-interest could be crowned with success, Choiseul without hesitation sent him next morning a peremptory order to quit the French dominions. The Pretender returned to Italy; and the nobleman who related to me these particulars, being in company with the late Duke of Gloucester<sup>1</sup> in 1770, while walking together in the streets of Genoa, met the Chevalier de St. George, then on his way back from France to Rome. The Duke de Choiseul was soon afterwards dismissed by Louis XV., and new principles of policy were adopted in the Cabinet of Versailles. The contest respecting the Falkland Islands being accommodated, peace continued to subsist between the Courts of France and England, while Charles Edward, driven by the mortifications which he experienced at Rome to abandon that city, sought refuge at Florence, where he finished in January 1788 his inglorious career, as James II. had done in 1701 at the palace of St. Germain, in the vicinity of Paris.

Louisa of Stolberg, Countess d'Albany, his consort, merited a more agreeable partner, and might herself have graced a throne. When I saw her at Florence, though she had been long married, she

<sup>1</sup> William Henry, brother of George III., born in 1743. In 1766 he married Maria, Countess Dowager of Waldegrave, the illegitimate daughter of Edward, brother of Horace Walpole. The Duchess died in 1807, surviving the Duke two years.—D.

was not quite twenty-seven years of age. Her person was formed on a small scale ; she had a fair complexion, delicate features, and lively as well as attractive manners. Born Princess of Stolberg-Gödern, she excited great admiration on her first arrival from Germany ; but in 1779 no hope of issue by the Chevalier could be any longer entertained, and their mutual infelicity had attained to such a height that she made various ineffectual attempts to obtain a separation. The French Court may indeed be censured in the eye of policy for not having earlier negotiated and concluded the Pretender's marriage, if it was desired to perpetuate the Stuart line of claimants to the English crown. When Charles Edward espoused the Princess of Stolberg he had passed his fiftieth year, was broken in constitution, and debilitated by excesses of many kinds. Previous to his decease she quitted Italy,<sup>1</sup> and finally established herself at Paris. In the year 1787 I passed an evening at her residence, the Hôtel de Bourgogne, situate in the Faubourg St. Germain, where she supported an elegant establishment. Her person then retained great pretensions to beauty, and her deportment, unassuming but dignified, set off her attractions. In one of the apartments stood a canopy with a chair of state, on which were displayed the royal arms of Great Britain ; and every piece of plate, down to the very tea-spoons, were ornamented in a similar manner. Some of the more massy pieces, which were said to have belonged to Mary of Modena, James II.'s Queen, seemed to revive the extinct recollections of the Revolution of 1688. A numerous company, both English and French, male and female, was assembled under her roof, by all of whom she was

<sup>1</sup> She eloped with Alfieri, to the great chagrin of the unhappy Prince.—D.

addressed only as Countess d'Albany; but her own domestics, when serving her, invariably gave her the title of Majesty. The honours due to a queen were in like manner paid her by the nuns of all those convents in Paris which she was accustomed to visit on certain holidays or festivals. She continued to reside in the capital of France till the calamitous progress of the French Revolution compelling her to abandon that country, she repaired to London, where she found new resources in the liberality and bounty of George III.<sup>1</sup>

While I am engaged on the adventures of the Stuart family, I shall commemorate a fact which will probably excite much astonishment. Dining at the present Earl of Hardwicke's in London with a large company in June 1796, among the persons present was the late Sir John Dalrymple,<sup>2</sup> known by his "*History of England*" and "*State Papers*." The conversation turning on historical subjects, he assured us that the Princess Sophia, mother of George I., who would have ascended the throne of Great Britain in her own person if she had not died about seven weeks before Queen Anne, was nevertheless a determined Jacobite in her political principles. On expressing our amazement at such an assertion, he declared that while he was occupied in looking over the memorable chest preserved in Kensington Palace, from which in the beginning of the present reign he took the "*State Papers*" given by him to the world, he found a bundle of letters, marked on the back in King William's own handwrit-

<sup>1</sup> George III. granted an annuity of £6000 to Cardinal York, the last of the Stuarts, who had become distressed from the invasion of Italy by the French.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Dalrymple, a Baron of the Exchequer in Scotland, born 1726, died 1810. Dr. Johnson said of him, "Dalrymple seems to be an honest fellow, for he tells equally what makes against both sides; but nothing can be poorer than his style of writing."—ED.

ing, "Letters of the Electress Sophia to the Court of St. Germain's." Having perused them, he ascertained beyond any doubt that Sophia was really engaged in close correspondence with James II., and was attached to his interests in opposition to those of William.<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Rochford,<sup>2</sup> then Secretary of State, having procured for Sir John Dalrymple permission from his Majesty to examine and print the papers in question, he immediately communicated to that nobleman his discovery, requesting at the same time his Lordship's sanction or approbation for publishing the letters of the Electress Sophia. "Publish them by all means, Jack," answered he. Thus empowered from such authority, Dalrymple destined them without delay for the press; but before he had time to get the letters copied, Lord Rochford sent to him desiring to have them delivered back to himself in order that he might submit them to his Majesty's inspection, he having on more mature reflection judged it proper to take the King's pleasure on a matter of such delicacy and singularity. Dalrymple returned them therefore to Lord Rochford, who carried them to the Queen's house,<sup>3</sup> and presented the bundle to his Majesty.

<sup>1</sup> "All this is strange to me, who have seen letters from the Electress Sophia to my own great-grandfather, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, who was kept by King James II. in the Tower for having had correspondence with her *Serenity*. He had had my grandpapa with him there, a little boy; his portrait is in Streatham Park now; and the last Baronet, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, father of this Lord Combermere, burned the letters, of which I remember only that they were full of Latin quotations, and that she signed her name with a long *s*,  *Sophia*. This last Sir Robert S. Cotton was first cousin to her who writes these notes, July 1815."—H. L. PIOZZI. Horace Walpole says that his father, when Minister, corresponded with the Pretender, but he took good care to show the letters to the King, and had them regularly endorsed by his Majesty.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> William Henry, fifth Earl of Rochford, who succeeded Lord Shelburne as Secretary of State in 1768.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Buckingham House, St. James's Park, now Buckingham Palace.—ED.

But they were neither restored, nor was even any allusion to them ever made in conversation by the King, he no doubt conceiving it more judicious to commit such documents to the flames than to permit their publication. However extraordinary this anecdote may appear, it ought not to surprise us, on full consideration, that Sophia should feel the warmest attachment to James II. He was very nearly related to her by consanguinity, *her* mother, Elizabeth, the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia, and Charles I., *his* father, being brother and sister. Nor could Sophia during many years subsequent to the Revolution of 1688 nourish the slightest expectation of being called to the British throne while the Princess Anne and her issue interposed between the House of Brunswick and that succession. It was not till after the death of William, the young Duke of Gloucester (the son of Anne), in 1700, when the Princess Sophia and her descendants being named by Act of Parliament to succeed eventually to the crown of Great Britain, as the nearest Protestant heirs of the royal line, her interests from that period became opposed to the right of blood existing in the Stuart race.

Brussels, where I made a short stay in the summer of the same year, 1779, exhibited another prince in a state of physical and mental infirmity, not less calculated to excite pity than the Pretender. The Austrian Netherlands were at that time administered, as they had been almost ever since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, by Prince Charles of Lorraine, the representative of the Empress-Queen. His double alliance, both by consanguinity and by marriage with the Emperor Francis and Maria Theresa, he being brother to the former, and having married the sister of the latter sovereign, these qualities and pretensions rather than any

mental endowments, civil or military, had raised him to the government of the Low Countries, the most enviable delegation of sovereign power then existing in Europe. Neither Hungary, nor the Milanese, nor Sicily, nor Sardinia, nor Ireland, nor Norway, could enter into any political competition with the rich provinces of Flanders, Haynault, and Brabant. Brussels constituted one of the most pleasing as well as elegant courts of the Continent; its local position, almost central between Germany, Holland, France, and England, rendering it far more important in a diplomatic point of view than either Venice, Turin, Warsaw, or Naples, perhaps I might add, even than Copenhagen or Stockholm. Prince Charles of Lorraine having been bred to the profession of arms, and possessing an athletic frame of body, united with unquestionable personal courage, had more than once nominally commanded the Austrian armies. His passage of the Rhine in 1744, and his irruption into Alsace, acquired him a degree of reputation, which he by no means afterwards preserved during the memorable Seven Years' War. To Frederick, King of Prussia, he formed indeed a most unequal antagonist, as that great prince sufficiently proved at the battle of Lissa in December 1757, where he defeated the Austrians, and on many other occasions. When I was presented to Prince Charles in August 1779, he might be regarded as performing the last of the Seven Ages of Man, and as sinking fast into "mere oblivion." At his levée he seemed apparently unconscious of anything beyond the mere ceremony of the hour, even his speech and articulation being rendered very indistinct by a paralytic affection. He expired in the following summer at his palace in the vicinity of Brussels, regretted by the Flemings for his moderation, and was succeeded in the government-general of the



Netherlands by the Archduchess Christina, the favourite daughter of the Empress-Queen Maria Theresa.

Never did a deeper political gloom overspread England than in the autumn of 1779, when I arrived in London from the Continent. I question whether at the time of the destruction of the ships of war lying in the Medway burnt by the Dutch under Charles II., or after the defeat of the English and Dutch combined fleets by the French off Beechy Head in 1690 under William and Mary, which constitute two of the most calamitous epochs in our history, greater despondency, consternation, and general dissatisfaction prevailed throughout the kingdom. The disgraceful naval campaign of 1778, in which Keppel's engagement off Ushant forms the principal or only feature,<sup>1</sup> had been succeeded by another year of hostilities still more humiliating to Great Britain. D'Orvilliers, at the head of the fleets of France and Spain, rode master of the Channel for a considerable time, and the total want of enterprise or of information on their part alone saved the town as well as the dockyards at Plymouth from falling into the enemy's possession.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When it was known that France was about openly to side with America against England, Keppel was sent to watch the French coast. He encountered the enemy's fleet under D'Orvilliers, and after much manœuvring on both sides, the fleets came to action, July 27, 1778. After three hours' contest, during part of which the English Vice-Admiral Palliser disobeyed signals and was not so forward as he might have been, the French fleet got safely under cover of night into Brest. Keppel made no charge against his second in command, but he declined to defend him against expressions made in Parliament. Thereupon Sir Hugh accused his chief of incapacity, and, to the great disgust of the navy and nation, Keppel, who was a Whig, was brought before a court-martial. His full acquittal threw the country into "frantic delight." London was illuminated. The houses of Sir Hugh and other Tories obnoxious to the people were attacked by the mob, and among the breakers of windows on that night were young William Pitt (it is said) and the Duke of Ancaster, who were taken to the watch-house.—D.

<sup>2</sup> The united fleets of France and Spain consisted of sixty-five ships

Not only was the place in want of many indispensable articles requisite to repel an attack; even flints for supplying the muskets (however incredible the fact may appear) were deficient. Sir Charles Hardy, who commanded our fleet, inferior in number of ships, and unapprised of the enemy's approach to the coast of England, remained quietly cruising in the Atlantic while they thus menaced Devon and Cornwall. Happily, the defect of intelligence or want of mutual confidence in the combined squadrons supplied every Ministerial neglect, and extricated the country from a calamity which, had it taken place, must have shaken not only the administration, but would have convulsed the throne itself. Faction did not, however, less pervade the navy, where the respective adherents of Keppel and of Palliser carried their reciprocal rancour to the utmost height. The American war after four unsuccessful campaigns began to grow odious to the nation, while the Administration, depressed under the weight of a contest to which the talents of the great Earl of Chatham himself might have been found unequal, did not manifest or exert the energy demanded by the nature of the emergency. Even the King, notwithstanding a display of private virtues which since Charles I. had not been exhibited by any sovereign of Great Britain, not even by William III., yet fully participated in the unpopularity of his Ministers. As he was supposed to feel a more than common interest in effecting the reduction of his revolted subjects, so he was believed to exert a more than ordinary personal influence over the Cabinet which directed the operations of the war.

of the line, besides a large number of frigates, sloops, and fireships. It is said that the Spanish Admiral was in favour of immediately invading England, but that Count D'Orvilliers objected to so strong a measure before the capture or destruction of the British fleet.—ED.

After the return of Lord Howe in 1778 from his unsuccessful campaigns in America, the supreme naval command on that coast, as well as in the West Indies, devolved on Admiral Byron.<sup>1</sup> He was a brother of Lord Byron, whose fatal duel with Mr. Chaworth<sup>2</sup> rendered him unfortunately too conspicuous in the Journals of the House of Peers. At an early period of his life, having been wrecked on the desert coast of Patagonia, not far from Cape Horn, with Captain Cheap, in the "Wager" frigate, he there endured those inconceivable hardships of which he has left us an interesting narrative. An intrepid and skilful no less than an experienced naval officer, he was nevertheless deficient in the judgment, promptitude, and decision of character requisite for conducting the operations of a numerous fleet. On the element of the water an evil destiny seemed invariably to accompany him, from his first expedition under Commodore Anson down to the close of his professional life. So well was this fact known in the navy, that the sailors bestowed on him the name of "Foul-Weather Jack," and esteemed themselves certain of stormy weather whenever they sailed under his command. From the time of his leaving England in 1778 till his return about two years afterwards, all the tempests of the deep seemed to have conspired against him. No man could less say of himself, with Æolus, or rather with Holstenius—

*"Ventorumque facis tempestatumque potentem ;"*

Virgil having written the line—

*"Nimborumque facis tempestatumque potentem."*

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Byron, the poet, was a lineal descendant of the Admiral.  
—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The duel between William, fifth Lord Byron, and his friend and

During the action which Byron fought with D'Estaing,<sup>1</sup> in July 1779, off Grenada, all the characteristic valour of the British was displayed, not only by the crews, but by the captains and their commander. Yet the honours of the day were divided, while the advantages of it were reaped by France; though the slaughter of men on the side of the French prodigiously exceeded our loss. But the West India Islands one after another fell into the enemy's hands, and after the surrender of Grenada, when D'Estaing quitted Martinico to carry the arms of Louis XVI. against Savannah, the capital of Georgia, he triumphantly swept the coast of America. We must reluctantly confess that the navy of England at this period had sunk to a point of depression hardly conceivable when compared with the times of Hawke, Saunders, and Boscawen, or if placed near the still more splendid period of Jervis, Duncan, and Nelson. We may incline to attribute so extraordinary a contrast to the errors or inability of Lord North's Administration, and the popular voice, I well know, sanctioned that accusation. But its cause lay principally in the nature of the contest, which, depressing the national energy and dividing the public opinion, unnerved the British spirit, and allowed France during near four years, from 1778 to 1782, aided by Spain, to make such exertions as acquired them a temporary ascendant on the ocean. Byron, recalled from his command, soon afterwards revisited England, and his name occurs no more in our naval

neighbour, William Chaworth of Annesley, was fought at the "Star and Garter" in Pall Mall. Lord Byron killed Chaworth, and in consequence was tried by his peers. He was found guilty of manslaughter by a majority of 114 against 4, but was discharged on claiming the benefit of the statute of Edward VI.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Hector, Comte d'Estaing.—ED.

history, but it has derived new celebrity in the present times from the poetic eminence to which his grandson has attained by productions surpassing the fame of Spenser, of Gray, of Mason, and of Scott.

To Byron succeeded Rodney, who fills so distinguished and illustrious a place during the unfortunate period of the American war, a naval commander as much characterised by the prosperous fatality which attended him as Byron seemed to be always under the influence of an unlucky planet.<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Mazarin, who, before he employed any individual, always asked, "*Est-il heureux?*" had *he* been first Minister of England, might have selected Rodney for active service, upon that principle, from among all the admirals in the navy. His person was more elegant than seemed to become his rough profession. There was even something that approached to delicacy and effeminacy in his figure; but no man manifested a more temperate and steady courage in action. I had the honour to live in great personal intimacy with him, and have often heard him declare that superiority to fear was not in him the physical effect of constitution, no man being more sensible by nature to that passion than himself, but that he surmounted it from the considerations of honour and public duty. Like Marshal Villars,<sup>2</sup> he justly incurred the reputation of being *glorieux et bavard*, making himself frequently the theme of his own discourse. He talked much and freely upon every subject, concealed nothing in

<sup>1</sup> It is said that the Romans never employed an unlucky general.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "And is not every brawler in the National Assembly as vain and insolent as Marshal Villars, who, though having witnessed all the victories and modesty of the Duke of Marlborough, plumed himself more on one very inferior combat, gained after Marlborough was withdrawn, than our hero did after years of success."—*Walpole to Countess of Ossory*, 1792 (*Letters*, ix. 399).—ED.

the course of conversation, regardless who were present, and dealt his censures as well as his praises with imprudent liberality, qualities which necessarily procured him many enemies, particularly in his own profession. Throughout his whole life two passions, both highly injurious to his repose, the love of women and of play, carried him into many excesses. It was universally believed that he had been distinguished in his youth by the personal attachment of the Princess Amelia,<sup>1</sup> daughter of George II., who displayed the same partiality for Rodney which her cousin, the Princess Amelia of Prussia, manifested for Trenck.<sup>2</sup> A living evidence of the former connection existed, unless fame had recourse to fiction for support;<sup>3</sup> but detraction in every age, from Elizabeth down to the present times, has not spared the most illustrious females.

The gaming-table had proved more ruinous in its effects to Rodney, and that indulgence ultimately compelled him to take refuge at Paris. So great was his pecuniary distress while he resided in the French capital, as to induce him to send over his wife to London early in 1777, with the view of procuring a subscription among the members of the club at White's for his relief. Lady Rodney finding it, however, impracticable to raise any supplies from that source, after much ineffectual solicitation

<sup>1</sup> Amelia Sophia Elenora, second daughter of George II., born at the palace of Herenhausen in Hanover, 30th May 1711, died 31st October 1786.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Trenck was born February 16, 1726. He was a favourite at the court of Frederick the Great until he was disgraced on account of his attachment to the Princess Amelia. After passing through many stirring adventures, he was guillotined at Paris on the 26th July 1794.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Piozzi writes: "Meaning, I suppose, the famous Miss Ashe, who, after many adventures, married Captain Falkner of the royal navy. She was a pretty creature, but particularly small in her person. *Little* Miss Ashe was the name she went by, yet I should think Rodney scarce old enough to have been her father. Her mother

among Sir George's former friends, finally renounced the attempt. The old Marshal de Biron<sup>1</sup> having soon afterwards, by an act of friendly liberality, enabled Rodney to revisit his country, he made the strongest applications to the Admiralty for employment. His private circumstances, indeed, imperiously demanded every exertion, when he was named, towards the autumn of 1779, to command the expedition then fitting out at Portsmouth for the West Indies.<sup>2</sup> I passed much of my time with him at his residence in Cleveland Row, St. James's, down to the very moment of his departure. Naturally sanguine and confident, he anticipated in his daily conversation, with a sort of certainty, the future success which he should obtain over the enemy, and he had not only already conceived, but he had delineated on paper, the naval manœuvre of breaking or intersecting the line,<sup>3</sup> to which he afterwards was indebted in an eminent degree for his brilliant victory over De Grasse—a manœuvre

people spoke of as with certainty."—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 331. She figures in Horace Walpole's Letters as the "Pollard" Ashe.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke de Biron, when Rodney was too poor to leave France, offered him a post of rank in the French navy, to which offer Rodney replied, "Monsieur le Duc, it is true that my distresses have driven me from my country, but no temptation can estrange me from her service. Had this offer been voluntary on your part, I should have considered it as an insult, but I am glad that it proceeds from a source that can do no wrong."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> In 1779 he defeated the Spanish fleet and relieved the garrison of Gibraltar, which was closely besieged.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> This manœuvre was the invention of John Clerk of Eldin, who, though not a naval man, had made a special study of naval tactics. In 1779 he communicated the plan to some of his friends, and in the following year, on a visit to London, he had some conferences with certain naval officers, among whom was Sir Charles Douglas, Rodney's captain of the fleet in the action of April 12, 1782. Sir Howard Douglas claimed the invention for his father, Sir Charles Douglas, but the claim is not accepted. Clerk printed fifty copies of his "Essay on Naval Tactics" in 1782 for private distribution. It was reprinted and published in 1790, and further parts were issued in 1797. The whole work was republished in 1804.—ED.

then new in maritime tactics, though now become familiar to us, and which Nelson practised with such decisive effect in the battle of the Nile, as well as on other occasions. Rodney possessed no superior intellectual parts, but, unlike Keppel, his enterprising spirit always impelled him rather to risk than to act with caution when in presence of an enemy. The ardour of his character supplied in some degree the defects of his health and constitution, already impaired by time and various causes, while his happy audacity, directed by the nautical skill of others, controlled by science, and propelled by favourable circumstances, at length enabled him to dissipate the gloom that had so long overhung our naval annals, at the same time that he acquired great personal glory.

The Ministry sustained about this time a diminution of strength and a loss of talents in the House of Peers, which an Administration so unpopular could ill afford, by the defection of Lord Lyttelton, who suddenly went over to the side of Opposition. His decease, not less sudden, took place immediately afterwards.<sup>1</sup> He was a man of very considerable parliamentary abilities, who, notwithstanding the many glaring vices of his private character, might have made a conspicuous political figure, if he had not been carried off in the prime of life. His father, the first Lord Lyttelton, well known as an historian and a poet, derived not less respect

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton, born 30th January 1744, commonly called the wicked Lord Lyttelton, to distinguish him from his father, the good Lord Lyttelton. He had supported Lord North's Government until the occasion of the Earl of Bristol's motion for an address to the King praying for the removal of the Earl of Sandwich from the office of First Lord of the Admiralty on 23d April 1779, when he supported the motion and seceded from the Ministerial ranks. He died childless, 27th November 1779, and his title was conferred upon his father's brother, William, Lord Westcote, an Irish peer, in 1794.—ED.



from the elevation of his mind and his many domestic virtues. The second Lord Lyttelton, profligate in his conduct, often abusing his talents, seemed to emulate Dryden's Duke of Buckingham or Pope's Duke of Wharton, both of whom he resembled in the superiority of his natural endowments as well as in the peculiarity of his end. Villiers (the "Zimri" of Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel"), after exhausting his health and squandering his immense fortune in every species of excess or riot, expired, as is well known, at a wretched tenement on his own estate near Helmsley in Yorkshire, before he attained his sixtieth year.<sup>1</sup> Wharton, who acted a part under George I. hardly less distinguished or eccentric than Villiers had performed under Charles II., prematurely terminated his equally extraordinary career at thirty-three, exiled and attainted among the Pyrenees in an obscure monastery of Catalonia, extenuated, like Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, by his pursuit of pleasures. Lyttelton, when scarcely thirty-six, breathed his last at a country-house near Epsom, called Pit Place, from its situation in a chalk-pit, where he witnessed, as he conceived, a supernatural appearance.<sup>2</sup>

Having gone down there for purposes of recreation with a gay party of both sexes, several individuals among whom I personally know, he had

<sup>1</sup> Pope's verses have given a wrong impression of the scene of the Duke's death, as there is no evidence of the extreme wretchedness of the house in which he died.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The whole story of Lord Lyttelton's death, which was perfectly natural, has been confused and sensationalised by the lovers of the marvellous. There is no authority for supposing that he saw an apparition. He dreamed that he saw a lady who had been dead several years, and that she warned him that he would die on the following night at twelve o'clock. The matter is discussed in Frost's "Life of Lord Lyttelton," 1876, pp. 343, 363. There are also some remarks by Mrs. Piozzi in her Autobiography, edited by A. Hayward, i. 332, 337.—ED.

retired to bed, when a noise which resembled the fluttering of a dove or pigeon, heard at his chamber window, attracted his attention. He then saw, or thought he saw, a female figure, which approaching the foot of the bed, announced to him that in three days precisely from that time he should be called away from this state of existence. In whatever manner the supposed intimation was conveyed, whether by sound or by impression, it is certain that Lord Lyttelton considered the circumstance as real; that he mentioned it as such to those persons who were in the house with him; that it deeply affected his mind, and that he died on the third night at the predicted hour. About four years afterwards, in the year 1783, dining at Pit Place, I had the curiosity to visit the bed-chamber where the casement window at which, as Lord Lyttelton asserted, the dove appeared to flutter was pointed out to me. And at his step-mother's, the Dowager Lady Lyttelton's<sup>1</sup> house in Portugal Street, Grosvenor Square, who, being a woman of very lively imagination, lent an implicit faith to all the supernatural facts which were supposed to have accompanied or produced Lord Lyttelton's end,<sup>2</sup> I have frequently seen a painting, which she herself executed in 1780, intended specially to commemorate the event. It hung in a conspicuous part of her drawing-room. There the dove appears at the window, while a female figure habited in white stands at the bed-foot, announcing to Lord Lyttelton his approaching dissolution. Every part of the

<sup>1</sup> The second wife of the first Lord, daughter of Field-Marshal Sir Robert Rich. Her indiscretion made an unhappy household, and she soon separated from her husband. She died in 1795.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Piozzi remarks: "Lady Lyttelton's imagination was supposed stronger than her veracity. She was *scouted* (as the coarse phrase is) by the family, and with good talents was, I fear, little esteemed by any one, though daughter to Sir Robert Rich, and had been pretty."—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 337.—ED.

picture was faithfully designed after the description given her by the valet de chambre who attended him, to whom his master related all the circumstances. This man assured Lady Lyttelton that on the night indicated Lord Lyttelton, who, notwithstanding his endeavours to surmount the impression, had suffered under great depression of spirits during the three preceding days, retired to bed before twelve o'clock. Having ordered the valet to mix him some rhubarb, he sat up in the bed, apparently in health, intending to swallow the medicine; but being in want of a teaspoon, which the servant had neglected to bring, his master, with a strong expression of impatience, sent him for a spoon. He was not absent from the room more than the space of a minute, but when he returned Lord Lyttelton, who had fallen back, lay motionless in that attitude. No efforts to restore animation were attended with success. Whether, therefore, his death was occasioned by any new attack upon his nerves, or happened in consequence of an apoplectic or other seizure, must remain matter of uncertainty and conjecture.

It is, however, to be observed that the Lyttelton family, either from constitutional nervous irritability or from other causes, was peculiarly susceptible of impressions similar to the shock which seems to have produced Lord Lyttelton's end. His father, though a man of very distinguished talents as well as of high moral principle, manifested great credulity, as I have been assured, on the subject of apparitions; and his cousin, Miss Lyttelton, who married the present Sir Richard Hoare,<sup>1</sup> died in a way somewhat similar about four years later at his beautiful seat of Stourhead, in the county of Wilts. The second Lord

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hoare, son of Sir Richard Hoare, Lord Mayor of London, created a baronet 10th June 1786. —ED.

Lyttelton's life had likewise been of a nature and description so licentious as to subject him continually to the keenest reproaches of an accusing conscience. This domestic spectre, which accompanied him everywhere, was known to have given rise while on his travels, particularly at Lyons, to scenes greatly resembling his last moments. Among the females who had been the objects and the victims of his temporary attachment was a Mrs. Dawson, whose fortune as well as her honour and reputation fell a sacrifice to her passion. Being soon forsaken by him, she did not long survive, and distress of mind was known to have accelerated, if not to have produced, her death. It was her image which haunted his pillow, and was supposed by him to have announced his approaching dissolution at Pit Place.<sup>1</sup>

Lord North, who had presided during ten years at the head of the Administration, continued in the spring of 1780 to struggle with the utmost difficulty through the sixth session of Parliament against a numerous and augmenting Opposition in both Houses. His resignation, anxiously anticipated by his political enemies, seemed to be inevitable and even imminent; but the Ministerial disgraces as well as the triumphs of the adverse party were equally obliterated in a calamity which, while it lasted, absorbed all attention—I mean the riots of June 1780.<sup>2</sup> No event commemorated in our annals bears any analogy with the scene then exhibited in the capital, except the fire of London under Charles II. Even that misfortune wanted some of the melancholy and sanguinary features which characterised the tumults in question. During the conflagration of 1666, whatever stories may have been

<sup>1</sup> This is incorrect. Mrs. Dawson lived for some years after Lord Lyttelton's death. He left her one thousand pounds in his will.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> So vividly described in Dickens's "*Barnaby Rudge*."—ED.

invented by party violence or inscribed at the time on public monuments by religious antipathy, the inhabitants had only to contend with the progress of a devouring element. In 1780 the flames were originally kindled, as well as rendered far more destructive, by a populace of the lowest and vilest description, who carried with them wherever they moved the materials of universal ruin. It was only in their blood, by the interposition of an overwhelming military force, that the convulsion became finally arrested, and that London, after being desolated by fire, was rescued from plunder, bankruptcy, and subversion. Even the French Revolution, which from July 1789 down to April 1814, either under the forms of a Republic or of a military despotism, has presented to mankind a pattern of every crime revolting and degrading to human nature, yet did not produce in the capital of France any similar outrages. At Lyons it must be admitted that Collot d'Herbois<sup>1</sup> in 1793 exercised the most savage vengeance on the buildings of the city as well as on the unfortunate inhabitants. But neither Robespierre nor Bonaparte, though the former ruffian converted the metropolis into a charnel-house, and though the vengeance or atrocious ambition of the latter adventurer has covered Europe with human bones, from the Tagus to the Moskwa, yet ever directed their destructive efforts against the public and private edifices of Paris.<sup>2</sup>

I was present at many of the most tremendous effects of the popular fury on the memorable 7th of June, the night on which it attained its highest point. About nine o'clock on that evening, accompanied by three other gentlemen, who, as well as myself, were

<sup>1</sup> Jean Marie Collot d'Herbois, a prominent Jacobin, born in 1750, died in 1796 in Cayenne, to which place he had been transported.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> This was left for the Communists of 1871 to accomplish.—ED.

alarmed at the accounts brought in every moment of the outrages committed, and of the still greater acts of violence, meditated as soon as darkness should favour and facilitate their further progress, we set out from Portland Place in order to view the scene. Having got into a hackney-coach, we drove first to Bloomsbury Square, attracted to that spot by a rumour generally spread that Lord Mansfield's residence, situate at the north-east corner, was either already burnt or destined for destruction. Hart Street and Great Russel Street presented each to the view, as we passed, large fires composed of furniture taken from the houses of magistrates or other obnoxious individuals. Quitting the coach, we crossed the square, and had scarcely got under the wall of Bedford House<sup>1</sup> when we heard the door of Lord Mansfield's house burst open with violence. In a few minutes all the contents of the apartments being precipitated from the windows, were piled up and wrapped in flames.<sup>2</sup> A file of foot-soldiers arriving drew up near the blazing pile, but without either attempting to quench the fire or to impede the mob, who were indeed far too numerous to admit of being dispersed or even intimidated by a small detachment of infantry. The populace remained masters, while

<sup>1</sup> This house occupied the whole north side of Bloomsbury Square.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> With his valuable library was burned the MS. of his own Memoirs. Cowper happily alludes to this loss in his verses on this disaster—

“ And memory sighs o'er Pope and Swift,  
 And many a treasure more,  
 The well-judged purchase and the gift  
 That graced his lettered store.  
  
 Their pages mangled, burnt and torn,  
 The loss was his *alone* ;  
 But ages yet to come shall mourn  
 The burning of his own.”

A few days after the destruction of his property Lord Mansfield said in regard to a question that came before him, “I have not consulted books ; indeed, I have no books to consult.”—ED.

we, after surveying the spectacle for a short time, moved on into Holborn, where Mr. Langdale's dwelling-house and warehouses afforded a more appalling picture of devastation. They were altogether enveloped in smoke and flame. In front had assembled an immense multitude of both sexes, many of whom were females, and not a few held infants in their arms. All appeared to be, like ourselves, attracted as spectators solely by curiosity, without taking any part in the acts of violence. Spirituous liquors in great quantity ran down the kennel of the street, and numbers of the populace were already intoxicated with this beverage. So little disposition, however, did they manifest to riot or pillage, that it would have been difficult to conceive who were the authors and perpetrators of such enormous mischief, if we had not distinctly seen at the windows of the house men who, while the floors and rooms were on fire, calmly tore down the furniture and threw it into the street or tossed it into the flames. They experienced no kind of opposition during a considerable time that we remained at this place; but a party of the Horse Guards arriving, the terrified crowd instantly began to disperse, and we, anxious to gratify our farther curiosity, continued our progress on foot along Holborn, towards Fleet Market.

I would in vain attempt adequately to describe the spectacle which presented itself when we reached the declivity of the hill close to St. Andrew's Church. The other house and magazines of Mr. Langdale, who, as a Catholic, had been selected for the blind vengeance of the mob, situated in the hollow space near the north end of Fleet Market, threw up into the air a pinnacle of flame resembling a volcano. Such was the beautiful and brilliant effect of the illumination, that St. Andrew's Church

appeared to be almost scorched by the heat of so prodigious a body of fire, and the figures designated on the clock were as distinctly perceptible as at noonday. It resembled indeed a tower rather than a private building in a state of conflagration, and would have inspired the beholder with a sentiment of admiration allied to pleasure, if it had been possible to separate the object from its causes and its consequences. The wind did not, however, augment its rage on this occasion, for the night was serene and the sky unclouded, except when it became obscured by the volumes of smoke, which from time to time produced a temporary darkness. The mob, which completely blocked up the whole street in every part and in all directions, prevented our approaching within fifty or sixty yards of the building ; but the populace, though still principally composed of persons allured by curiosity, yet evidently began here to assume a more disorderly and ferocious character. Troops, either horse or foot, we still saw none, nor in the midst of this combination of tumult, terror, and violence, had the ordinary police ceased to continue its functions. While we stood by the wall of St. Andrew's churchyard, a watchman with his lanthorn in his hand passed us calling the hour as if in a time of profound tranquillity.

Finding it altogether impracticable to force our way any farther down Holborn Hill, and hearing that the Fleet Prison had been set on fire, we penetrated through a number of narrow lanes behind St. Andrew's Church, and presently found ourselves in the middle of Fleet Market. Here the same destruction raged, but in a different stage of its progress. Mr. Langdale's two houses were already at the height of their demolition ; the Fleet Prison, on the contrary, was only beginning to blaze, and the sparks



or flaming particles that filled the air fell so thick upon us on every side as to render unsafe its immediate vicinity. Meanwhile we begun to hear the platoons discharged on the other side of the river towards St. George's Fields, and were informed that a considerable number of the rioters had been killed on Blackfriars Bridge, which was occupied by the troops. On approaching it, we beheld the King's Bench Prison completely enveloped in flames. It exhibited a sublime sight, and we might be said there to stand in a central point, from whence London offered on every side, before as well as behind us, the picture of a city sacked and abandoned to a ferocious enemy. The shouts of the populace, the cries of women, the crackling of the fires, the blaze reflected in the stream of the Thames, and the irregular firing which was kept up both in St. George's Fields as well as towards the quarter of the Mansion House and the Bank ; all these sounds or images combined left scarcely anything for the imagination to supply, presenting to the view every recollection which the classic descriptions of Troy or of Rome in the page of Virgil or of Tacitus have impressed on the mind in youth, but which I so little expected to see exemplified in the capital of Great Britain.

Not yet satisfied, and hearing that an obstinate conflict was going on at the Bank between the soldiery and the rioters, we determined, if possible, to reach that spot. We accordingly proceeded through St. Paul's Churchyard towards it, and had advanced without impediment to the Poultry, within about sixty paces of the Mansion House, when our progress was stopped by a sentinel, who acquainted us that the mob had been repulsed in their attempt upon the Bank, but that we could penetrate no farther in that direction, as his orders were peremp-

tory not to suffer the passage of any person. Cheap-side, silent and empty, unlike the streets that we had visited, presented neither the appearance of tumult nor of confusion; though to the east, west, and south all was disorder. This contrast formed not the least striking circumstance of the moment. Prevented thus from approaching any nearer to the Bank, finding the day begin to break, satiated in some measure with the scenes which we had witnessed, and wearied by so long a peregrination, which from our first alighting near Bloomsbury Square had all been performed on foot, we resolved to return to the west end of town. On Ludgate Hill we were fortunate enough to meet with a hackney-coach, which conveyed us safely back about four o'clock in the morning.

It is impossible for the most prejudiced person without violating truth to accuse the Opposition of having had any participation as a body, direct or indirect, in these enormities. They were, indeed, themselves individually the objects of popular prejudice and violence, not less than the Ministers; Sir George Savile's house in Leicester Square having been one of the first buildings assailed and plundered by the mob.<sup>1</sup> Devonshire House, in Piccadilly, menaced with the same fate, was considered as so insecure, that the Duchess of Devonshire, yielding to her fears, did not venture to remain in it after dusk for a considerable time. She took refuge at Lord Clermont's residence in Berkeley Square, where she deemed herself safe from attack, and lay down for successive nights on a sofa or a small tent-bed placed in the drawing-room. Many other persons of both sexes of the

<sup>1</sup> Sir George had introduced the Bill for the Emancipation of Roman Catholics, which had raised the petition against it, and subsequently the riots.—D.

highest rank either quitted their own dwellings or sent their most valuable effects and jewels into the country. The first Minister, Lord North, passed that alarming night at his official residence in Downing Street, accompanied by a few friends, who had repaired thither to offer him their personal aid, if circumstances should render it necessary for his protection.

One of those gentlemen, Sir John Macpherson, has often recounted to me the particulars of that memorable evening, which I shall give in his own words, and which will be perused with no common interest. "A day or two before the 7th of June," said he, "Count Maltzahn, the Prussian Minister at our Court, called on me at Kensington Gore, where I then resided, and informed me that the mob had determined to attack the Bank.<sup>1</sup> He added, that the fact had come to his knowledge through an authentic channel, on the accuracy of which I might depend. Having conveyed this intelligence immediately to Lord North, I received on the morning of that day an intimation to be at his house in Downing Street at dinner. When I got there, I found Mr. Eden<sup>2</sup> (since created Lord Auckland), the Honourable General Simon Fraser,<sup>3</sup> the Honourable John St. John,<sup>4</sup> and Colonel North, afterwards Earl of Guilford.<sup>5</sup> Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Piozzi's remark on this is, "The foreigners always obtain the first intelligence of everything."—*Autobiography*, &c., A. Hayward, i. 337.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Third son of Sir Robert Eden, Bart. He was an active diplomatist in the last quarter of the last century. He died in 1814.—D.

<sup>3</sup> Honourable Simon Fraser, son of the twelfth Lord Lovat, who was executed for high treason. He died a lieutenant-general in 1782.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> Youngest son of the second Viscount Bolingbroke. He was Surveyor-General of the Crown Lands, and died in 1793.—D.

<sup>5</sup> He was the third Earl; was born in 1757, succeeded his father in 1792, and died in 1802.—D.

Brummell, Lord North's private secretary, who lived likewise in the same street, was in attendance, but did not make one of the company. We sat down at table, and dinner had scarcely been removed, when Downing Square, through which there is no outlet, became thronged with people, who manifested a disposition, or rather a determination, to proceed to acts of outrage. Lord North, with his habitual good-humour, observed to me, 'You see, Macpherson, here is much confusion. Who commands the upper tier?' 'I do,' answered Colonel North, 'and I have got twenty or more grenadiers, well armed, stationed above stairs, who are ready on the first order to fire upon the mob.' General Fraser sat silent; while Mr. Eden, whose house was situated on the opposite side of the square, only remarked calmly to Colonel North, that if the grenadiers fired, their shot would probably enter his windows. The tumult without doors still continuing, and it being uncertain from one minute to another whether the populace might not proceed to extremities, Lord North said to me, 'What is to be done, Macpherson?' 'My opinion,' answered I, 'is to send out two or three persons, who, mixing among the crowd, may acquaint them that there are troops posted in the house ready without waiting for the Riot Act being read, to fire on them the instant that they commit any outrage; exhorting them, at the same time, for their own sakes, to disperse peaceably without delay. But,' added I, 'Nous parlons de la guerre devant Annibal. Here sits General Fraser, who knows far better than any of us what is wisest to be done, and who has not yet opened his mouth.' The populace continued to fill the little square, and became very noisy, but they never attempted to force the street door. Mr. St. John held a

pistol in his hand, and Lord North, who never lost an occasion of jesting, exclaimed, 'I am not half so much afraid of the mob as of Jack St. John's pistol.' By degrees, as the evening advanced, the people, informed from various quarters that there were soldiers posted in the house, prepared to fire if they committed any violence, began to cool and afterwards gradually to disperse without further effort. We then sat down again quietly at the table and finished our wine.

"Night coming on, and the capital presenting a scene of tumult or conflagration in many various quarters, Lord North, accompanied by us all, mounted to the top of the house, where we beheld London blazing in seven places, and could hear the platoons regularly firing in various directions. 'What is your opinion of the remedy for this evil?' said Lord North to me. 'I should try, my Lord,' answered I, 'to effect a junction, or to open some communication with the heads of Opposition for the protection of the country.' 'You talk,' replied he, 'as if the thing could be done, but it is not practicable.' I know, however, that a day or two afterwards, notwithstanding the opinion so given by Lord North, he and Mr. Fox personally met, the former accompanied by Brummell,<sup>1</sup> and the latter by Sheridan,<sup>2</sup> behind the scenes at the Opera House in the Haymarket at eleven in the forenoon. They held a conference there, but of the nature of the conversation which passed between them I am wholly ignorant." Such was Sir John Macpherson's account of the circumstances to which he was an eye-witness at that moment of public calamity. He now remains, since Lord Auckland's decease, the only survivor of the company that was convened in Downing Street.

<sup>1</sup> Father of the notorious Beau Brummell.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Sheridan was then director of the Opera House.—ED.

Lord George Germain,<sup>1</sup> like the first Minister, having assembled some friends for the purpose, barricaded the passages and entrance to his house in Pall Mall, which was very susceptible of defence, after which he coolly waited for the attack of the populace. But the rioters were too well informed of the precautions taken to venture making any attempt on him. Even the King himself remained on foot during the far greater part of that memorable night, which he passed between Buckingham House<sup>2</sup> and the Royal Manège contiguous; into the latter of which buildings a detachment of the Horse Guards had been early admitted, who were ready to have sallied out upon the insurgents. No man who knows the steadiness and firmness which his Majesty has since displayed in the most trying situations, when his person has been exposed to danger, can doubt that he would have given on that occasion, had it been unfortunately necessary, unquestionable proofs of courage. He would not have acted the tame and irresolute part which Louis XVI. exhibited on the 10th of August 1792, when, under similar circumstances, surrounded by a savage Jacobin mob, instead of defending himself to the last extremity, as he was bound to have done, not only by every principle of self-preservation, but from regard to the interests of the French Monarchy, he abandoned the defence of his

<sup>1</sup> Lord George Sackville, third son of Lionel, first Duke of Dorset, was born in 1716. He was degraded from his rank of general and struck off the list of privy councillors on account of his conduct at the battle of Minden on 1st August 1759. George III., however, took him into favour, and in December 1765 he was appointed one of the Vice-Treasurers for Ireland. In 1770 he assumed the name of Germaine by Act of Parliament, pursuant to the wish of Sir John and Lady Elizabeth Germaine of Drayton and Northampton. On 10th November 1775 he was nominated Secretary of State for the American Colonies, and in 1782 he was created Viscount Sackville. He died 26th April 1785.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Also called the Queen's House, now Buckingham Palace.—ED.

palace and of his family to take refuge in the National Assembly. George III. had embraced the resolution of repelling force by force in case of necessity, and of perishing in support of the laws of civil order and regular government, rather than survive their extinction. But happily no attempt was made by the populace to attack any part of the Queen's House or offices.

Various were the opinions and assertions hazarded relative to the numbers that perished in the riots between the 3d and the 7th of June 1780, but as no certain data can be obtained beyond the official returns of killed and wounded, the amount must always remain matter of conjecture. Probably it far exceeded the computation commonly made, and from the concurring testimony of those persons who were most competent to form a sound judgment, I believe it would not be overrated at seven hundred individuals killed and wounded.<sup>1</sup> The slaughter was most considerable at the King's Bench, at the Bank, and on Blackfriars Bridge. Colonel de Burgh,<sup>2</sup> a son of the Earl of Clanricard, commanded one of the regiments sent to St. George's Fields. All the troops did their duty, notwithstanding the efforts which the populace exerted to seduce them, by calling on them as Protestants, and invoking their aid or their protection. Many of the soldiers, in reply to these blandishments, exclaimed that they would not hurt the mob. A great nobleman, now alive, who, like myself, was a spectator of all the scenes of devastation committed on that night, told

<sup>1</sup> About two hundred and eighty were killed or subsequently died of their wounds, and the wounded amounted to nearly the same number.—D.

<sup>2</sup> John Thomas de Burgh, Colonel of the 66th Foot, was brother of the twelfth Earl and first Marquis, whom he succeeded as thirteenth Earl, the Marquisate expiring. He was born in 1744, succeeded his brother in 1797, and died 27th July 1808.—ED.

me that he felt strong doubts whether De Burgh's regiment would actually draw the trigger. Impressed with that conviction, he mentioned his apprehensions on the point to the Colonel, who instantly replied that he knew his men, and could rely on their prompt obedience. The event justified his confidence, for no sooner had he given the word of command to fire, than, levelling their pieces, they soon compelled the rioters to seek their safety in immediate dispersion. If the *gardes françaises* in 1789 had behaved like our regular troops in 1780, the French Revolution might have been suppressed in its birth, and Europe would not have groaned during fourteen years under the accumulated calamities inflicted on it by Bonaparte. But the difference of character between the two sovereigns of Great Britain and of France constituted one great cause of the different fate that attended the two monarchies. George III., when attacked, prepared to defend his throne, his family, his country, and the constitution intrusted to his care. They were, in fact, principally saved by his decision. Louis XVI. tamely abandoned all to a ferocious demoralised populace, who sent him to the scaffold. No man of courage or of principle could have quitted the former prince. It was impossible to save or to rescue the latter ill-fated, yielding, and passive monarch.

Many of the rioters who fell at Blackfriars Bridge or in its vicinity, where the slaughter was most considerable, were immediately thrown over into the Thames by their companions. The carnage which took place at the Bank likewise was great, though not of very long duration; and in order to conceal as much as possible the magnitude of the number, as well as the names of the persons who perished, similar precautions were taken on both sides. All the dead bodies, being carried away during the night,



were precipitated into the river. Even the impressions made by the musket-balls on the houses opposite to the Bank were as much as possible erased on the following morning, and the buildings white-washed. Government and the rioters seemed to have felt an equal disposition, by drawing a veil over the extent of the calamity, to bury it in profound darkness. To Colonel Holroyd, since deservedly raised to the British peerage as Lord Sheffield, and to his regiment of militia, the country was eminently indebted for repelling the fury of the mob at the Bank, where, during some moments, the conflict seemed doubtful, and the assailants had nearly forced an entrance. Lord Algernon Percy, since created Earl of Beverley,<sup>1</sup> marched likewise at the head of the Northumberland militia to the same spot. Their arrival, together with the energy, promptitude, and decision which Colonel Holroyd manifested, principally conduced to ensure the safety of that great national establishment.<sup>2</sup> Numbers of the insurgents concealed their wounds in order to evade discovery of the part which they had taken in the disorders of the capital. It is, however, indisputable that almost all who perished were of a low and obscure description.

If the populace had been conducted by leaders of ability, London must have been entirely overturned on that night.<sup>3</sup> The Bank, the India House, and

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. Lord Algernon Percy, second son of Hugh, first Duke of Northumberland, born 1750, succeeded his father as Baron Lovaine in 1786, was created Earl of Beverley, 2d November 1790, and died 21st October 1830.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Sheffield, by his commercial disquisitions and agricultural pursuits or productions, has since rendered scarcely less important services to his country. Nor ought he to be forgotten in another capacity, as the friend and the biographer of Gibbon, whose mortal remains repose under his protection at Sheffield Place in Sussex.—WRAXALL.

<sup>3</sup> There was a foolish report, credited for a while, that the Whigs had instigated the riots in order to bring disgrace on the Government.

the shops of the great bankers would in that case have been early attacked, instead of throwing away their rage, as they did, on Popish chapels, private houses, and prisons. When they began, after their first fury had exhausted itself, to direct their blows more systematically and skilfully, the time for action was passed. Government, which was accused, perhaps with reason, of having appeared supine during the first days of June, awoke early enough to preserve the metropolis and public credit from sustaining the last shock of popular violence. In fact, from the instant that the three bridges over the Thames were occupied by regular troops, the danger was at an end. This awful convulsion, which, on Wednesday, the 7th of June, seemed to menace the destruction of everything, was so completely quelled and so suddenly extinguished, that on the 8th hardly a spark survived of the popular effervescence. Some few persons in the borough of Southwark attempted to repeat the outrages of Wednesday, but they were easily and immediately quelled by the military force. Never was a contrast exhibited more striking than between those two evenings in the same city. The patrols of cavalry stationed in the squares and great streets throughout the west end of the town gave London the aspect of a garrison, while the camp which was immediately afterwards formed in St. James's Park afforded a picturesque landscape, both sides of the canal, from the Queen's House down to the vicinity of the Horse Guards, being covered with tents and troops.<sup>1</sup>

The Lord Mayor (Brackley Kennett) was shamefully inert at this crisis, and his conduct was severely censured. The obloquy he brought upon himself is said to have broken his heart.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> The encampment continued for several months. In the King's collection of prints in the British Museum there are a couple of drawings showing the encampment as it appeared on June 20, 1780. There was another encampment in Hyde Park.—ED.

The common danger, which united all parties for the time, extinguished, or at least suspended, even the virulence of political enmity. Alarmed at the prospect of universal destruction, some of the principal leaders of the Opposition repaired unasked to St. James's, under pretence of offering their services to the Administration, nearly as the Dukes of Somerset and Argyle had done in the last days of July 1714, when Queen Anne lay insensible, near her end. The Marquis of Rockingham,<sup>1</sup> hearing that a Privy Council was summoned to meet on the morning of the 7th of June, which assembly all who enjoyed seats at that board were invited to attend, made his appearance in an undress, his hair disordered, and with testimonies of great consternation. Nor did he, when seated at the table where the King was present, spare the Ministers for having, as he asserted, by their negligence or want of timely energy allowed the assemblage of people to take place in St. George's Fields, which original meeting led to all the subsequent outrages. It is nevertheless incontestable that to the decision manifested by his Majesty on that occasion the safety of the metropolis and its extrication from all the calamities that impended over it was principally, if not solely, to be ascribed. Elizabeth or William III. could not have displayed more calm and systematic courage than George III. exhibited in so trying a moment. Far from throwing himself for support or guidance on his Cabinet, as a prince of feeble character would have done, he came forward and exhibited an example of self-devotion to his Ministers.

It is well known that at the council to which I have alluded the King assisted in person. The

<sup>1</sup> Charles, Marquis of Rockingham, twice Prime Minister. He died 1st July 1782.

great question was there discussed on which depended the protection and preservation of the capital, a question respecting which the first legal characters were divided, and on which Lord Mansfield himself was with reason accused of never having clearly expressed his opinion up to that time. Doubts existed whether persons riotously collected together and committing infractions of the peace, however great, might legally be fired on by military power without staying previously to read the Riot Act. Lord Bathurst, President of the Council, and Sir Fletcher Norton,<sup>1</sup> Speaker of the House of Commons, who were both present, on being appealed to for their opinion, declared that "a soldier was not less a citizen because he was a soldier, and consequently that he might repel force by force;" but no Minister would sign the order for the purpose. In this emergency, when every moment was precious, Wedderburn,<sup>2</sup> since successively raised to the dignity of a Baron and of an Earl of Great Britain, who was then Attorney-General, having been called in to the council table, and ordered by the King to deliver his official opinion on the point, stated in the most precise terms that any such assemblage might be dispersed by military force without waiting for forms or reading the Act in question. "Is that your declaration of the law as Attorney-General?" said the King. Wedderburn answering firmly in the affirmative. "Then so let it be done," rejoined his Majesty. The Attorney-General drew up the order immedi-

<sup>1</sup> Sir Fletcher Norton, Attorney-General for a time, Speaker of the House of Commons, 1770; created Baron Grantley, 1782; he died 1st January 1789.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Wedderburn was created Lord Loughborough on the 14th of June 1780, and appointed Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas. In 1793 he became Lord Chancellor, an office which he held until 1801, when he was created Earl of Rosslyn. He died childless, 3d January 1805, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.—ED.

ately, which the King signed, and on which Lord Amherst<sup>1</sup> acted the same evening. The complete suppression of the riots followed in the course of a few hours. Never had any people a greater obligation to the judicious intrepidity of their sovereign. If Louis XVI. would have acted with similar decision and self-devotion in the early stages of the French Revolution, France might have been equally saved from subversion.

Nor ought we to deny the merit due to Wedderburn for having with so much decision cut the gordian knot which the Lord Chief-Justice of the King's Bench either could not or would not untie. His inexplicit declarations on the subject involuntarily remind us of the accusations levelled against him by "Junius," when, speaking of Lord Mansfield, he says, "Besides his natural timidity, it makes part of his political plan never to be known to recommend violent measures. When the Guards are called forth to murder their fellow-subjects, it is not by the ostensible advice of Lord Mansfield." Here we see him in 1780 acting precisely as he had done twelve years earlier in 1768. Nor is it a less curious and extraordinary fact that the very exertion by which the King preserved London in June 1780 from suffering the utmost extremities of violence and pillage, constitutes *as a principle* the subject of Junius's severest reflections upon him in March 1770. "Did his Majesty," says he, "consult the laws of this country when he permitted his Secretary of State to declare that whenever the civil magistrate is trifled with, a military force must be sent for *without the delay of a moment* and effectually employed?" So true is it that at every period of his life the King manifested the same consistency of character and superiority to

<sup>1</sup> Lord Amherst was Commander-in-Chief.—ED.

personal apprehension. When, nevertheless, we reflect that in 1768 a magistrate of the county of Surrey had been capitally accused and brought to trial for ordering the soldiery to fire on rioters engaged in acts of violence in St. George's Fields, though the Riot Act had been twice read, we cannot be surprised at the apprehension displayed by Lord Mansfield to sanction and authorise the same proceeding in 1780, nor ought we lightly to censure his conduct. The sovereign alone, as first magistrate, impelled by the awful nature of the emergency, and he only, could have taken upon him so serious a responsibility.

No individual manifested more abhorrence of the rioters or exposed himself by his declarations on that subject to more personal danger than Burke,<sup>1</sup> whom his enemies accused of having been brought up in the tenets or principles of the Romish faith. This conduct did him great honour, and proved him superior to the meanness of party. His house in the Broad Sanctuary, Westminster, was threatened but not attacked. Fox contented himself with condemning the authors of the disorders, but took no active part, *as a member of the Legislature*, in their suppression.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, he refused to lend

<sup>1</sup> Burke was a marked object of the rioters' hatred.

<sup>2</sup> The Edinburgh Reviewer (Sir James Mackintosh) objected to this aspersion on the character of Fox. He writes: "During the riots, twenty gentlemen remained there nightly on guard at the Marquis of Rockingham's house, armed with muskets and heavy pistols in their belts. Among them were Mr. Thomas Grenville, General Fitzpatrick, and Mr. Fox." Fox, however, was tired of inactivity, and he therefore sallied forth with Fitzpatrick, and took one of the rioters prisoner. Wraxall's answer to this is: "The reviewers dilate with a sort of exultation on the circumstances of Mr. Fox having passed three nights at Lord Rockingham's house armed during the riots of June 1780, and on his having collared one of the rioters, whom he brought prisoner to Grosvenor Square. No man ever questioned his attachment to the head of his own party, or his abhorrence of the excesses of a ferocious mob, which manifested as much antipathy to the members of the Opposition as to the Government. But the question is, Did Mr. Fox,

any personal support to Government when pressed in the House of Commons to co-operate for the extrication of the capital, though Burke, who was there present, loudly expressed his wish for unanimity and association in that moment of national distress. It is impossible not to recollect that as they thus diverged in different lines during the riots of 1780, so in 1792, twelve years later, they exhibited a similar diversity of conduct—Burke lending his powerful aid to prop monarchial government, while Fox remained the advocate of Republicanism and the apologist of the French Revolution. Wilkes, who in the early part of his Majesty's reign had made so glorious a resistance to *general warrants*, displayed as manly a resistance to popular violence during the whole progress of the riots; and had he filled the chair of chief magistrate, instead of Kennett, would unquestionably by his vigour have prevented many or all the disgraceful scenes which took place in the capital.

The numerous proofs given by the Opposition of their detestation for these calamitous exhibitions of popular fury did not, however, produce complete conviction of their sincerity. Many persons still believed that some of the parliamentary leaders secretly fomented or privately encouraged the rioters. Suspicions were in particular thrown on the Earl of Shelburne, probably with great injustice.<sup>1</sup> The natural expectation of effecting a change in the Ministry

'when pressed in the House of Commons to co-operate for the extrication of the capital, lend any support to the Administration in that moment of national distress,' as Burke did?"

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Piozzi remarks on this: "A man remarkable for duplicity will be always suspected, whether deserving suspicion or no. Gainsborough drew Lord Shelburne's portrait. My Lord complained it was not like. The painter said *he* did not approve it, and begged to try again. Failing *this* time, however, he flung away his pencil, saying, 'D—— it, I never could see through varnish, and there's an end.'"—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, by A. Hayward, i. 338.—ED.

was imagined to suspend or supersede in certain minds every other consideration; and it was even pretended, though on very insufficient grounds, that peers did not scruple to take an active part in the worst excesses of the night of the 7th of June.<sup>1</sup> Public clamour selected the Earl of Effingham as an object of accusation. It was generally asserted that he had mingled with the rioters on Blackfriars Bridge; that he had there been mortally wounded, and his body afterwards thrown into the river by those of his own party, but not till he had been identified and recognised by his dress, particularly by his laced ruffles. Those who were acquainted with that nobleman and who knew his style of dress instantly detected the absurdity as well as falsity of the charge, for no man was ever less distinguished by any ornaments of apparel. His sudden disappearance from London, where he certainly had been seen at the commencement of the riots, the general ignorance in which people remained of the place to which he had withdrawn, when added to his known as well as violent dislike to the Administration and to the American war, of which he had exhibited a singular proof by renouncing his profession and his rank in the British army only a few years earlier rather than submit to serve against the insurgents beyond the Atlantic, all these circumstances conduced, nevertheless, to maintain the delusion for a considerable time. At the beginning of the ensuing winter he reappeared in the House of Lords in his usual health, and stated to his acquaintance that early in June he had gone down to his seat of Grange Hall in Yorkshire, where

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hayward writes that it was a current report, which he had heard Lord Macaulay relate, that the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville was with a party that broke into the Admiralty, and that the *second* time he entered it as First Lord ("Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi," i. 338, *note*).—ED.



he had ever since resided. Such persons as still remained incredulous explained his absence by saying that he had been hurt or wounded on the 7th of June, but it is probable that the report originated altogether in calumny.<sup>1</sup>

Lord George Gordon, the author of these calamities, was not taken into custody till two or three days after they had been terminated. Ministers were reproached with not having committed him to the Tower on the 2d of June, when he assembled, harangued, and excited the mob to extort compliance with their demands from the House of Commons. But the attempt to seize and to send him to prison at a time when every avenue to the House was thronged with multitudes, when the lobby overflowed with a tumultuous populace, and when the doors of the House itself might have been every instant forced in, would have formed an imprudent not to say a dangerous experiment. It is difficult to find any instance in our annals when Parliament received a grosser insult, or when the members composing both Houses incurred a greater risk of falling victims to popular violence. The mobs of 1641 and of the following year, under Charles I., directed their rage against the sovereign and his principal advisers, not against the representatives of the nation. Cromwell, when in 1653 he drove out and dissolved the Rump Parliament, offered no outrage to their persons, but simply broke up the legis-

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Howard, third Earl of Effingham. He further exhibited his sympathy for the Americans by erecting a banqueting-house, which he called "Boston Castle," because no tea was ever drank there. He was honest, able, and eccentric. He was Treasurer of the Household in Lord Rockingham's second Administration, and as he carried his official wand with his Deputy Earl Marshal's baton, he was called "the Devil on two sticks." Burke replied to the remark of a Tory upon his coat, "It is the same in which he was killed at the riots." He died in 1791 in Jamaica, of which island he was governor.—D.

lative assembly by a military force. The tumults in 1733, when Sir Robert Walpole first attempted to introduce the excise laws, seem to form the nearest approach or similarity to the proceedings in 1780, but *longo intervallo*.

It cannot be doubted that if the populace had forced their way into the House of Commons, Lord George would not have survived to recount the exploit. Many members present, indignant at his conduct, threatened him with instant death as soon as any of the rioters should burst open the doors. The late Earl of Carnarvon, then Mr. Henry Herbert, followed him close with that avowed determination, and General Murray, uncle to the present Duke of Athol,<sup>1</sup> a man whom I intimately knew, and who, when incensed, was capable of executing the most desperate resolution, held his sword ready to pass it through Lord George's body on the first irruption of the mob.<sup>2</sup> It will always remain disputable whether ambition, fanaticism, or alienation of mind contributed most to the part which he acted in assembling and inciting the people to acts of violence. That he was not insensible to the political consideration and importance which he obtained from his personal influence over so vast a multitude cannot be questioned. To religious enthusiasm or conviction some share may perhaps be fairly attributed, but more must be laid to the deranged state of his understanding, though no

<sup>1</sup> John, the fourth Duke, who had inherited the title six years before the riots of London, viz., 1774. He died in 29th September 1830. His features are well known to the public in the engraving of Landseer's picture of the death of the stag in Glen Tilt.—D.

<sup>2</sup> The General was Governor of Minorca when the Duke de Crillon stooped to the infamy of acting as the agent of Spain, and offering him a bribe to induce him to surrender Fort St. Philip. The offer was treated with indignant scorn. The General died in 1794.—D. Walpole reports that Murray, then Colonel, said to Lord George Gordon, "I see many lives will be lost, but, by God, yours shall be one of them."—*Walpole's Letters*, vii. 378.—Ed.

circumstance in his conduct or deportment could possibly subject him to be considered as insane. He appears, in fact, to have been perfectly master of himself, and in possession of all his faculties during every stage of the riots; nor is it to be imagined that he either foresaw or intended any of the excesses which were committed after the 2d of June. But he had put in motion a machine of which he could not regulate or restrain the movements, and unquestionably the mob which set fire to London was of a far more savage as well as atrocious description than the original assemblage of people who met in St. George's Fields. The late Lord Rodney,<sup>1</sup> who was then an officer in the Guards, told me that, having been sent on the night of the 7th of June to the defence of the Bank of England at the head of a detachment of his regiment, he there found Lord George Gordon anxiously endeavouring to induce the populace to retire. As soon as Lord George saw Captain Rodney he expressed his concern at the acts of violence committed, adding that he was ready to take his stand by Captain Rodney's side, and to expose his person to the utmost risk in order to resist such proceedings. Rodney, who distrusted his sincerity and considered him as the cause of all the calamities, declined any communication with him, only exhorting him, if he wished to stop further effusion of blood and to prevent the destruction of the Bank, to exert himself in dispersing the furious crowd. But whatever might be his inclination, he was altogether destitute of the power. The military force alone saved the Bank from being plundered, and prevented the temporary subversion of the national credit.

<sup>1</sup> George, eldest son of the great Admiral. He was born in 1753, succeeded his father in 1792, and died in 1802.—D.

I knew Lord George Gordon<sup>1</sup> well, and I once accompanied him from a party where we met in Lower Grosvenor Street, at the late Lord Elcho's, to Ranelagh, in the summer of 1782 in his own coach. In his person he was thin, his features regular, and his complexion pale. His manners were gentle, his conversation agreeable, and he had the appearance as well as the deportment of a man of quality. There was, however, something in his cast of countenance and mode of expression that indicated cunning, or a perverted understanding, or both. His whole income consisted, I believe, in an annuity of six hundred pounds a year,<sup>2</sup> paid him by the Duke of Gordon, his brother.<sup>3</sup> It forms a singular subject of reflection that, after involving London during several successive days in all the horrors of insurrection and anarchy, he should have escaped any punishment for these proceedings, which cost the lives of so many individuals and the demolition of so many edifices;<sup>4</sup> while he expiated

<sup>1</sup> Lord George was third son of Cosmo, Duke of Gordon. According to Hannah More, he was a man of loose morals, and Walpole describes him as very debauched. He was George Selwyn's nominee for the borough of Ludgershall. In 1787 he was found guilty of two separate libels, one against Marie Antoinette, and the other against the French Ambassador, and committed to Newgate, where he passed the remainder of his life. He died of the jail distemper on the 1st November 1793 at the age of forty-two, and was buried in a graveyard attached to St. James's Chapel, Hampstead Road.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> It is a curious instance of the value of money at this time that it was possible to keep a carriage on six hundred a year. A few years later it would have been impossible.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander, the fourth Duke, who wore his coronet from 1752 to 1827—three quarters of a century.—D.

<sup>4</sup> He was lodged in the Tower, tried and acquitted. It is reported that public thanksgivings were returned at several churches for his acquittal. There was considerable difficulty in convicting the rioters. Fanny Burney wrote to Mrs. Thrale on July 1, 1780:—"Nothing here is talked of but the trial of the rioters: most people among those who are able to appear as witnesses are so fearful of incurring the future resentment of the mob, that evidence is very difficult to be obtained, even where guilt is undoubted; by this means numbers are daily discharged who have offended against all laws, though they can be punished by none."—ED.

by a rigorous imprisonment to the end of his days in Newgate the publication of a libel on the late unfortunate Queen of France, who herself perished on the scaffold. He exhibited the strongest attestation of the sincerity of his conversion to Judaism by submitting to one of the most painful ceremonies or acts enjoined by the Mosaic law. The operation, which was performed at Birmingham, confined him to his chamber for a considerable time, and he preserved with great care the proofs of his having undergone the amputation. Few individuals occupy a more conspicuous or a more unfortunate place in the annals of their country under the reign of George III. He will rank in history with Wat Tyler and Jack Cade, the incendiaries of the Plantagenet times, or with Kett, so memorable under Edward VI.

The elements seemed to conspire with all the foreign enemies of Great Britain at this period, the hurricane of October 1780,<sup>1</sup> which took place in the West Indies, being one of the most tremendous in its nature, as well as violent in its effects, commemorated in the course of the eighteenth century. Though its destructive rage spread devastation in a greater or a less degree over the whole chain of the Carribee islands, yet Barbadoes experienced its greatest fury, together with the severest loss of lives and property. A friend of mine, General James Cunningham, was then governor of the colony. He has related to me, that after remaining above ground as long as it was practicable with safety, he, accompanied by a number of his family and domestics, took refuge in a small cellar several feet lower than the level of the street, at Bridge

<sup>1</sup> The damage done by this hurricane was widespread, and many circumstances that have been related of the force of the wind in this hurricane appear almost incredible.—ED.

Town, the capital of the settlement. Here, indeed, they found themselves secure against being crushed under the ruins of the house which they had just quitted, or from being completely borne off and swept away by the force of the wind; but they were soon assailed by two new misfortunes, against which they could provide no sufficient remedy. The first inconvenience arose from the severe cold which they endured, the climate having changed in the course of a few hours from intense heat to a contrary extreme. The other evil, which was of a still more alarming nature, threatened their destruction from the rain which flowed in upon them in great quantity, as it fell in torrents. While they remained in this deplorable situation, up to the knees in water, doubtful whether to continue in the cellar, where about twenty of them huddled together were crowded into a very narrow space, or whether to attempt reaching some more secure shelter, a tall athletic negro of General Cunningham's family, who lay upon him in a posture which did not admit of his moving, said to the General, "Massa, if I not make water, I die." "Do it then in God's name," answered he. The negro had no sooner received this permission, than instantly availing himself of it, he bedewed the General from the nape of his neck to his very shoes, much, as we are taught to believe, in the manner of a Hottentot priest when celebrating the nuptial ceremony. "But," added Cunningham, when relating the story, "never did I experience a more grateful sensation than was produced by this warm libation, which seemed to animate my frozen frame and to revivify my body. I regretted when it stopped, and I derived from it essential service in the horrors of that indescribable night."

The situation of the negro, impelled by a necessity

paramount to all respect or restraint, reminds me of a fact somewhat similar which took place at the palace of Sans Souci. The great Frederick, in a select society, having been one day more elevated and convivial than usual after dinner, was induced by the gaiety of the conversation to prolong the accustomed limits of the repast, and to detain his guests to a late hour. His Majesty furnished himself the chief share of the entertainment by the brilliancy of his sallies, but he forgot, unfortunately, that his guests were men. One of them, an old General, who was often among the persons invited to the royal table, but whose powers of retention had suffered in the course of twelve campaigns, anticipated with extreme impatience the moment when the King, by rising, would permit of his quitting the apartment. In this hope and expectation he long supported with unshaken fortitude one of the most pressing demands of nature. Overcome at length, and yielding to a power stronger than himself, he suddenly rose from his chair, and exclaiming, "Sire, tout est grand dans votre Majesté, jusqu'à la vessie même. Sire, je me meurs," ran out of the room. Frederick was charmed with the ingenuity of the compliment, and laughed heartily at the General's distress, which might, however, have proved fatal to him. Tycho Brahe's death was caused by a precisely similar act of imprudent respect.

Parliament having been dissolved early in September 1780, I was elected one of the members for Hindon ; and the new House of Commons meeting towards the end of October, the debate turned on the choice of a Speaker. Lord George Germain, not Lord North, commenced the proceedings on that evening, and performed the principal Ministerial part. It was not intended by Administration that Sir Fletcher

Norton, who during near eleven years, ever since the resignation of Sir John Cust in January 1770,<sup>1</sup> had filled the chair, should reoccupy it in the new Parliament. He had given umbrage during the session of 1777, both to the sovereign and to Ministers, by a memorable speech which he addressed to the King while standing in his official capacity at the bar of the House of Peers. And though the admonition or exhortation that he thought proper then to use, relative to the economical expenditure of the money voted by the House of Commons, had met with the approbation of the country at large, yet it unquestionably produced his eventual exclusion from the employment of Speaker. Lord North having tried the ground at St. James's, found his Majesty determined upon the point. Conscious, nevertheless, that it would be highly unpopular to place his intended dismissal on such a basis, Ministers availed themselves of Sir Fletcher's ill state of health, which had considerably impeded the progress of public business in the preceding session, as forming a sufficient cause for his removal. While, therefore, they passed high eulogiums on his ability and talents, they lamented that infirmities of body rendered it improper to ask of him, or to accept from him, a continuance of his public services. Sir Fletcher, however, rising in his place, and speaking from the Opposition bench, while he was sustained by that powerful and numerous phalanx, endeavoured to point out the latent enmity, as well as the obvious nullity, of the Ministerial arguments. He affected, it is true, to disclaim any wish of being again placed in the Speaker's chair,<sup>2</sup> but he took care to

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Cust, Bart., was Speaker of the House of Commons from 1761 until his death in 1770. His son, Sir Brownlow Cust, was raised to the peerage as Baron Brownlow.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> He bitterly complained of Lord North attempting to remove him without previous notice to himself. He had been Speaker since



accompany the declaration by an assertion of his perfect physical capacity to meet its duties and fatigues. His appearance seemed indeed to present the aspect of a man who, though somewhat declined in years, did not manifest any tokens of decay. All the personal attacks levelled by Norton's friends on the Opposition side of the House at Lord North could neither induce nor provoke the first Minister to open his lips on the occasion. He remained profoundly silent; but Mr. Rigby,<sup>1</sup> unintimidated by the clamours of Sir Fletcher's adherents, after boldly avowing that he was dismissed for his political trespasses, justified his exclusion from the chair on parliamentary or on Ministerial grounds. Cornwall was chosen Speaker by a very large majority.

Sir Fletcher Norton, though perhaps justly accused as a professional man of preferring profit to conscientious delicacy of principle, and though denominated in the coarse satires or caricatures of that day by the epithet of "Sir Bullface Doublefee," yet possessed eminent parliamentary knowledge as well as legal talents.<sup>2</sup> Far from suffering in his

1770. Wraxall did not think him undignified, yet Junius tells us that on one occasion he told the House that "he should regard one of their votes no more than a resolution of so many drunken porters." He was unseemly, too, in his altercations with Lord North. Wraxall is incorrect in another respect, for Sir Fletcher did allude to his ill-health, caused by the performance of duties which, he said, had (he feared) impaired his intellect. He lost his election to the chair on the present occasion by 203 against 134.—D.

<sup>1</sup> The Right. Hon. Richard Rigby, born in 1772, Paymaster of the Forces for many years, died on 8th April 1788. He was an unprincipled placeman, but he had a jovial manner, and was a favourite with his companions.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Piozzi quotes one of these satires, although she says the second line is not exact:—

"Careless of censure, and no fool to fame,  
Firm in his double post and double fees,  
Sir Fletcher, standing without fear or shame,  
Pockets the cash, and lets them laugh that please."

—*Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 339.—ED.

capacity of Speaker by comparison either with his immediate predecessor or successor in that high office, he must be considered as very superior to both. The chair of the House of Commons during the whole course of the eighteenth century was never filled with less dignity or energy than by Sir John Cust, whom Wilkes treats in all his letters with the most contemptuous irony or the most mortifying insult. Cornwall possessed every physical quality requisite to ornament the place—a sonorous voice, a manly as well as imposing figure, and a commanding deportment; but his best Ministerial recommendation consisted in the connection subsisting between him and Mr. Charles Jenkinson,<sup>1</sup> then Secretary at War, which the marriage of the former gentleman with the sister of the latter had cemented. After his election, Cornwall gave little satisfaction, and had recourse to the narcotic virtues of porter for enabling him to sustain its fatigue, an auxiliary which sometimes becoming too powerful for the principal who called in its assistance, produced inconveniences. The “*Rolliad*,” alluding to the Speaker’s chair as it was filled in 1784, says—

“There Cornwall sits, and ah! compelled by fate,  
Must sit for ever through the long debate;

Like sad Prometheus fastened to the rock,  
In vain he looks for pity to the clock,  
In vain the powers of strengthening porter tries,  
And nods to Bellamy for fresh supplies.”

We may here remark, as a curious fact, that Sir Fletcher’s dismissal from the office of Speaker

<sup>1</sup> Charles Jenkinson, born May 16, 1727. In 1778 he became Secretary at War, and in 1784 President of the Board of Trade. He was raised to the peerage as Lord Hawkesbury in 1786, and was created Earl of Liverpool in 1796. His supposed secret influence with George III. made him at one time very unpopular. He died December 17, 1808. His “*Treatise on the Coins of the Realm*,” 1805, has lately been republished by the Bank of England.—ED.

conducted him within eighteen months to the dignity of the peerage,<sup>1</sup> an elevation which he owed solely to the jealousies and rivalries that arose between Lord Rockingham and Lord Shelburne as soon as they got into power; whereas Cornwall, his successful competitor, after presiding more than eight years in the House of Commons, died without reaching the House of Lords.<sup>2</sup> It was thus that Dunning attained that goal while Wallace missed it. So much does the disposition of events, which in common language we denominate fortune, regulate the affairs of men, in defiance of Juvenal's

"Nos te,  
Nos facimus, fortuna, deam, cæloque locamus."

I scarcely remember during near fourteen years that I sat in different Parliaments a more personal or a more acrimonious debate than I witnessed soon after my first entrance into the House on the 6th of November. It took place on the address proposed to be carried up to the foot of the throne in answer to his Majesty's speech. Lord George Germain again assumed the first part, and attracted towards himself all the severity of Opposition, Lord North being unavoidably compelled to absent himself on account of indisposition. The recent nomination of Sir Hugh Palliser<sup>3</sup> to the government of

<sup>1</sup> Sir Fletcher Norton, born in 1716, filled the offices of Attorney-General (1763), Chief-Justice in England south of Trent (1769), and Speaker of the House of Commons from 1770 to 1780. He was created Lord Grantley, Baron of Markenfield in 1782, and died in 1789.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Wolfram Cornwall, Speaker from 1780 until his death (2d January 1788). He was succeeded by William Wyndham Grenville; afterwards Lord Grenville.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Hugh Palliser (born 1721), a most deserving officer, appears to have been very unjustly treated on account of his quarrel with the popular favourite, Keppel. He was second in command at the battle fought off Ushant, and finding on his return to England that the public were dissatisfied with the result of the engagement, he obtained a court-martial on Admiral Keppel and himself, which com-

Greenwich Hospital drew from Fox the most pointed as well as violent reflections, not only on various members of the Cabinet, but on the sovereign himself. Not content with declaring that "there could be only one of the King's servants" (the Earl of Sandwich<sup>1</sup>) "so abandoned, so lost to all sensibility or honour, as to have dared to advise such a measure," he added that "his surprise was the less excited by the fact, because it formed the characteristic of the present reign to hunt down, to defame, and to vilify great or popular public men, while the infamous were upheld, employed, and rewarded." As if apprehensive that the application of these last words might be in any degree ambiguous, he subjoined, fixing his eyes on Lord George Germain, "The recent promotion of Sir Hugh Palliser is dictated by the same spirit which has produced the promotion of a man to one of the greatest *civil* employments who has been publicly degraded and declared to be incapable of serving again in any *military* capacity, at the head of every regiment in the service."<sup>2</sup> So severe if not illiberal an allusion, which could not be misunderstood, instantly called up Lord George, who ob-

mened on 7th January 1779. The court acquitted Keppel and declared the prosecution to be malicious. It further decided "that Admiral Palliser's behaviour was in many instances highly meritorious and exemplary, but blamable in not having made known to the Admiral his distressed condition; yet as he was censurable in no other part of his conduct, that he ought to be honourably acquitted." He died in 1796 at Greenwich Hospital.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> John George Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich, born in November 1718, first Lord of the Admiralty for many years, died 30th April 1792. Wilkes styles him in his "Letters to the Electors of Aylesbury" "the most abandoned man of his age."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> At the battle of Minden, 1759, Lord George commanded the British and Hanoverian horse, under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, commander-in-chief. The French were utterly routed, but Lord George was charged with disobedience of orders in not bringing his cavalry forward, and he was dismissed the service. Having disgraced himself, Lord Bute's Administration restored him to favour, and he was subsequently raised to the dignity of Viscount Sackville.—D.

served that "the aspersion which the honourable member had thought proper to throw out in the course of his speech, being obviously directed at himself, the House might naturally expect he would notice it. I rise, therefore," said he, "once for all, simply to declare that whenever gentlemen descend to the meanness of personal invectives instead of argument, and shall think proper to make me their object, I am prepared to treat both the invectives and their author with the contempt that they deserve." Fox allowed this answer to pass unnoticed on that evening, but next day, having probably felt that it could not be altogether despised, he thought proper to say, while speaking on the report of the address to the crown, that "the noble Secretary's words during the preceding debate, however personal to himself they might be, yet were so qualified as to render it wholly unnecessary for him to take any further notice of them." Admiral Keppel<sup>1</sup> treading in the traces of Fox, repeated, however, nearly the same accusations as had already been brought forward against the first Lord of the Admiralty, whom Keppel charged with incapacity and mismanagement of the naval forces, and stigmatised as meriting universal reprobation for having recommended Palliser to his Majesty for the government of Greenwich Hospital. Such an appointment conveyed indeed indirectly a severe censure upon himself. These personalities and charges did not prevent the address from being voted by a majority of eighty-two. The exclusion of Sir Fletcher from the chair on the first day of the session had only been carried by sixty-nine. On

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Augustus Keppel, second son of William, Earl of Albemarle, was born April 2, 1725. He was created a peer as Viscount Keppel in 1782, the same year as he was appointed first Lord of the Admiralty, and died October 3, 1786.—ED.

so precarious a foundation did the Ministers stand, even at the commencement of a new Parliament, and so weak were the foundations on which reposed Lord North's power towards the close of the year 1780, undermined as it was by an unfortunate if not an unpopular contest. When a motion was made a few days later by Mr. Thomas Townshend<sup>1</sup> to vote the thanks of the House to their late Speaker, after a debate of considerable length, Administration could only command ninety-six votes, while Opposition carried the question by a majority of forty, having divided one hundred and thirty-six, though Lord North was present on the occasion. But the motion being conceived in very laconic and general terms, the first Minister neither rose to speak nor made any personal effort to impede its success.

A long and very interesting debate arose on the 27th of November, when Daniel Parker Coke, member for the town of Nottingham (one of the most upright, honourable, and incorrupt individuals who ever sat in Parliament), moved the thanks of the House to Sir Henry Clinton and Earl Cornwallis for the important services that those commanders had rendered to their country on the other side of the Atlantic. An infinity of curious matter was elicited by the nature of the subject, as it naturally or necessarily embraced the American war, a topic calculated to produce interminable

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Townshend, eldest son of Honourable Thomas Townshend, second son of Charles, second Viscount Townshend, born in February 1733. He was Secretary of State in Lord Shelburne's Administration in 1782, and created Lord Sydney in 1783, and Viscount Sydney in 1789; died June 13, 1800. Goldsmith alludes to him in "Retaliation" when describing Burke—

"Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat  
To persuade Tommy Townshend to give him a vote."  
—ED.

discussions. Neither the first Minister nor Fox, though both addressed the House in the course of the evening, performed the principal parts. Wilkes pronounced a speech of great length and of still greater severity, which (as he was accustomed to do) he had prepared, not without evident labour, for the occasion. It was, like every composition of his, spirited, classic, and stamped with the characteristic energy of his fearless mind. In the course of it he neither spared Lord Cornwallis, whose inconsistency in drawing his sword to maintain a cause which a few years earlier he had reprobated publicly in the House of Peers, Wilkes endeavoured to expose; nor did he fail to attack both the Ministers and the sovereign by whom the war was carried on against the Colonies. The right claimed by the crown and by Parliament to tax America he reprobated as "an antiquated usurpation of the Stuarts, revived under the third prince of the family of Brunswick. This pretension," exclaimed he, "has been in every age the favourite maxim of despots. In opposition to it Hampden shed his blood. Such an attempt against the fundamental rights of the English people justified our ancestors in commencing the civil war which conducted the tyrant Charles to the scaffold." He concluded by imploring of Mr. Coke to withdraw a motion in which no man could concur without indirectly giving his sanction or approbation to the American war itself. Lord North, on the other hand, expressed his hope that Wilkes would be the only individual in the House to oppose the motion. But another dissentient voice was raised to it in the person of Sir Joseph Mawbey, a man who, from some unfortunate circumstances of his private life, never could obtain a patient or a candid hearing in Parliament. Rigby and Courtenay both attacked him, not indeed with argument,

but with a more powerful weapon, ridicule. Sheridan and Fox rose to defend Sir Joseph, as he constantly voted with Opposition. In 1784, after he had quitted that party and joined Pitt against "the Coalition," they turned their powerful artillery upon him. The "Rolliad," when speaking of the necessity imposed upon the Speaker, Cornwall, to continue in the chair while the House is sitting, adds—

"Painful pre-eminence !—He hears, 'tis true,  
Fox, North, and Burke, but hears Sir Joseph too ;"

lines which form a parody on Pope's address to Lord Bolingbroke, which he concludes by saying—

"Painful pre-eminence !—Ourselves to view  
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too !"

Sir Joseph Mawbey spoke, nevertheless, with great good sense, though not with brilliancy. He was at this time the colleague of Admiral Keppel, and represented the county of Surrey. To the Marquis of Rockingham, during the short administration of that nobleman in 1765, he owed his elevation to the rank of a baronet. Like Wilkes, he refused to concur in the vote of thanks to Lord Cornwallis, but the motion was not the less finally carried without a division.

Little consolation can be derived during this gloomy period of English history from carrying our view beyond the metropolis to the extremities of the empire, or from considering the operations of the war by sea and land. As Geary had succeeded to the command of the Channel Fleet by Hardy's death,<sup>1</sup>

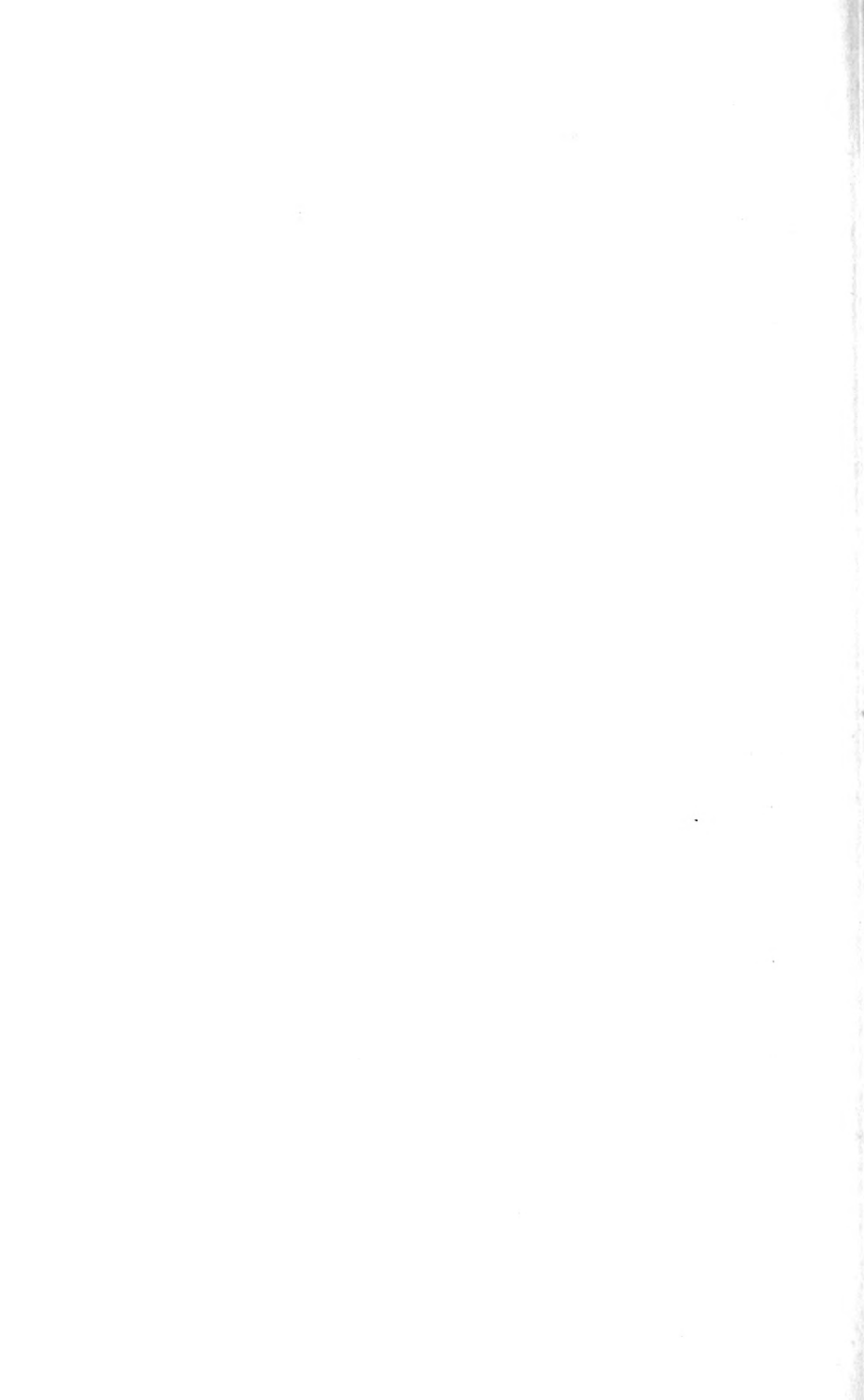
<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Hardy died suddenly at Portsmouth in 1780, and was succeeded by Francis Geary, Admiral of the White, who retired a few months afterwards. Admiral Geary's name appears frequently in Walpole's Letters during 1781, but seldom with much credit, except that on one occasion he relieved Gibraltar. He was created a baronet





THOMAS LORD LYTTELTON

*From a Miniature*



so Darby took the same command soon afterwards, in consequence of Geary's resignation.<sup>1</sup> None of these names will be pronounced with enthusiasm by posterity. Admiral Barrington,<sup>2</sup> by his repulse of D'Estaing at St. Lucie, acquired the only renown gained on the ocean from the commencement of hostilities in July 1778 down to the period when Rodney was sent out to the West Indies. The inveterate disputes that arose between Keppel and Palliser, which, after convulsing the navy and dividing the kingdom, began insensibly to fall into oblivion, were again revived during the short time that the House of Commons remained sitting before the Christmas recess. In consequence of Sir Hugh Palliser's appointment to the government of Greenwich Hospital, the events of the 27th July 1778 were discussed anew with all the acrimony of party. Fox originated the discussion by the severity of his animadversions on Palliser, who had just taken his seat in the House as member for the town of Huntingdon, where Lord Sandwich's interest had procured his election. The Earl of Lisburne<sup>3</sup> having laid the navy estimates upon the table, an animated and most personal debate ensued. Lord Nugent, who was then well advanced towards fourscore, vainly attempted, by calling Fox repeatedly to order, to give the subject a more general direction. When Fox had exhausted every topic of declamation with which the occasion furnished, and died 7th February 1796, in his eighty-seventh year. He was one of the members of the court-martial which tried Admiral Byng.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> George Darby, Vice-Admiral of the Red, died February 1790.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Walpole says that when Admiral Barrington refused the command on the death of Hardy, he asked where our fleet was, and our seamen and our discipline (Walpole's Letters, vii. 370).—ED.

<sup>3</sup> William Vaughan, fourth Viscount Lisburne. In 1770 he was appointed a Lord of the Admiralty, and was created an Earl in 1776. He died 6th June 1800.—ED.

nished him, both against Palliser and against the first Lord of the Admiralty, Lord North rose to protect them, and in a very able speech endeavoured to show how unjust a persecution the Vice-Admiral had undergone. Sir Hugh himself, conscious of his inability to contend with such an adversary as Fox on such a theatre as Parliament, after denying the pretended allegations made by his enemies, and acknowledging his obligations to the first Minister for the eloquent defence just pronounced, proceeded to read his own justification. The paper, by its length, dulness, and perhaps still more by the imperfect or defective manner of its delivery, put the patience of his auditors, as I well remember, to a severe trial.

Palliser, who had risen from an obscure origin by long and distinguished services to the rank of a baronet and to some of the highest honours of his profession, wanted the advantages of education, as well as those of manner, deportment, and external grace, in all which he was wholly deficient. Nor had he, like his opponent Keppel, the support derived from high descent and alliances. I have, however, always considered him as a most judicious, meritorious, and calumniated naval officer, who, overcome by the torrent of party, fell a sacrifice to Ministerial unpopularity. Never can I forget the picture that he drew of the action fought on the 27th of July, a day not to be recollected by an Englishman without feelings allied to humiliation. He declared in the face of the House of Commons, that the British fleet was led into action in a disorderly and unskilful manner: at the commencement, too much contempt of the enemy, but towards its close with too much awe; keeping at too great a distance, and manœuvring in confusion. In his reply to Palliser, Keppel contented himself with intrench-

ing his reputation behind the sentences of the two courts-martial, reiterating, at the same time, the charges of treachery blended with falsehood which Fox had already brought forward against the first Lord of the Admiralty. Not that Keppel's courage could be called in question, as had happened, though, as I believe, most unjustly, in the memorable instance of Byng,<sup>1</sup> but in self-possession, judgment, superior maritime skill, and presence of mind, endowments which commonly ensure victory, I have always regarded him as deficient. Even the disordered state of his health tended to incapacitate him on the 27th of July for performing with promptitude the arduous duties of his situation. I apprehend, now that time has softened down the asperities of party, this opinion is become general. Keppel's exploits will never be ranked with those of Rodney, of Duncan, or of Nelson, nor will they ever be associated to the glorious recollections of the best years of George III. Lord North, with whom not to be defeated constituted a sort of victory, and who generally contented himself with half triumphs, after defending Palliser with his usual ability and with more than his common animation, having thus rescued him from the immediate attack of his enemies, aimed at no further advantage, but moved an adjournment early in December.

As if to complete the climax of our national misfortunes at this humiliating period, Holland was added to the number of our enemies, war being

<sup>1</sup> The loss of Port Mahon so enraged the English people that they attributed cowardice and treachery to Admiral Byng, and the Ministry in order to save themselves fanned the popular flame. On one of the caricatures of the time was the following distich :—

“ ’Tis Britannia's doom, here's a halter for B[ying] ;  
As he fought like a *sheep*, like a *dog* let him swing.”

The court-martial, however, cleared Byng of the charge of cowardice.  
—ED.

declared against the Seven United Provinces before the close of 1780, notwithstanding the repugnance equally felt at such a rupture by the King of Great Britain and by the Stadtholder. More than a century had then elapsed since we had been engaged in hostilities with the Dutch under the profligate reign of Charles II. During some portion of the intermediate time the two countries had been governed by one prince, and one spirit might be said to animate their counsels after the expulsion of James II., when their joint efforts were directed to stem the current of Louis XIV.'s arms in the Netherlands. Even subsequent to King William's decease the United Provinces made common cause with his successor against France under Marlborough, but the disgraceful termination of that great struggle, which lasted near ten years, dis-severed England and Holland. After the peace of Utrecht in 1712, no close nor cordial union subsisted between the Cabinets of the Hague and of St. James's. The Dutch were indeed prevailed on to join George II. as auxiliaries, though not as principals, in the war of 1743, undertaken to preserve Maria Theresa on the throne of her father Charles VI. Unfortunately, the English, Dutch, and Austrian armies, which, while conducted by the great talents of Eugene and Marlborough, had nearly driven Louis XIV. to the last extremities, when led by Königseck and by William, Duke of Cumberland, were everywhere defeated on the same plains.

Marshal Saxe made himself master of the barrier that protected Holland against the overwhelming power of France, and only the moderation or the indolence of Louis XV., which checked his conquests, gave peace to Europe in 1748 at Aix-la-Chapelle. That prince, had he been animated by the ambition of his predecessor, or by the spirit of

conquest which impelled the French Republic in 1795, might have entered Amsterdam and have subjected the Zuyder Sea to his dominion. Having escaped from this imminent peril, the Dutch remained neutral spectators of the contest which took place between us and France in 1756, when Flanders, which for near a century had constituted the Palæstra of Europe, by a singular transition became a country of repose, and the House of Austria for the first time joined her inveterate foe, the House of Bourbon. It was reserved for the calamitous era of the American war, which familiarised us with disgraces and reverses, to witness Holland openly ranged against Great Britain under the banners of Louis XVI. and Charles III. The Opposition exulted at the declaration of hostilities between the two countries as setting the seal to Lord North's Ministerial embarrassments. Nor could it be denied that the necessity for blocking the mouth of the Texel, and probably engaging the Dutch fleet at the entrance of their own ports, in the depressed as well as inferior state to which the British navy had then sunk, augmented the difficulties under which the Administration laboured, while it increased the unpopularity of the sovereign.

Yet never did any Government make greater efforts than were exerted by Lord North's Cabinet to avert a rupture. Sir Joseph Yorke, who, by long residence in Holland, had become in some measure naturalised at the Hague, exhausted every art of diplomacy to stem the current of French and American politics. The Stadtholder, no less than the majority of the people throughout the Seven United Provinces, nourished the warmest partiality towards Great Britain, but the Prince of Orange had lost the public respect which his high office ought to have excited, and the nation, immersed in

narrow speculations of commercial advantage, displayed no spark of that public spirit or of those great energies which had operated such powerful effects against Philip II. and III. of Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The pensionary Van Berkel, acting under the impulse of Maurepas and of Vergennes, precipitated his countrymen on hostilities against England by signing a treaty with the American insurgents, precisely as Madison,<sup>1</sup> in the summer of 1812, commenced hostilities with us by the suggestions of his Corsican director. Nor did Fox and Burke arraign more severely the measures of Lord North, as having produced the rupture that took place with Holland, than the leaders of Opposition in the House of Commons inveighed against the line of conduct adopted on the part of Ministers, which led to the late contest with America. Both wars originated from a similar cause—the apparently desperate or highly alarming condition of England. In 1780 we appeared to be rapidly sinking under the combination of European, Asiatic, and American foes. In 1812 Buonaparte, master of the Continent from the frontiers of Portugal to those of Russia, prepared to consummate the subjugation of Europe by a march to Moscow. To Van Berkel and to Madison the occasion seemed equally favourable for the development of their enmity to the English Government. The measures of the former Minister led, at no distant period of time, in the space of about fifteen years, to the subjugation and subversion of the Republic of Holland. Futurity will show whether the policy of Madison (if his subservience to Buonaparte can merit the name) will prove more successful or beneficial to his countrymen, and will demon-

<sup>1</sup> James Madison, fourth President of the United States, born in 1751, died June 28, 1836.—ED.



strate how far the American President may justly challenge their future gratitude more than the Pensionary of Amsterdam merited the support of the Dutch.

Nearly about the same time Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, expired at Vienna, after a reign of forty years, during which time she had exhibited a memorable instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. Like Frederick II., King of Prussia, she acceded in 1740, and a great portion of their lives was passed in mutual hostility. The strength of her mind and the tenacity of her character sustained her amidst difficulties which a woman of inferior resolution could not have surmounted. Since the death of Elizabeth, Queen of England, in 1603, Europe had not beheld any female seated on the throne who united so many private virtues<sup>1</sup> to so many great public endowments. Maria Theresa manifested a masculine mind blended with feminine qualities calculated to conciliate universal affection. Elizabeth, however illustrious she appeared when viewed in her kingly capacity, wanted softness, sincerity, and all the gentler qualifications that render woman an object of attachment. Henry VII. and Henry VIII. were both resuscitated in her, though without the avarice of her grandfather, or the capricious, obdurate, and sanguinary despotism of her father. Maria Theresa resembled her in this point of view. As a sovereign, she possessed far greater constancy and energy than had been exhibited by her father, the Emperor Charles VI., or by her grandfather, Leopold I. Charles, while resident in Spain during "the war of the succession," displayed no endowments of character, and was twice driven out of Madrid in consequence of his delays or incapacity. Leopold betrayed a want of

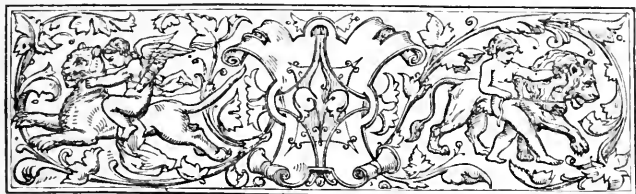
<sup>1</sup> A respect for truth was not among them.—D.

every resource when, in 1683, at the approach of the Grand Vizier Cara Mustapha, he fled to Passau, leaving his capital to be invested and his dominions to be ravaged by the Turks. The caution, experience, and moderation of Maria Theresa, increased by religious scruples, imposed a restraint on the pernicious activity of her son and successor, Joseph II. His accession to the dominions of the House of Austria, and the line of policy that he embraced, constituted one of the many concurring circumstances which eventually facilitated the progress of the French arms in the Netherlands after the Revolution.

Though sinking under the accumulated pressure of advancing age as well as of disease and infirmity, Maria Theresa retained the possession of all her faculties nearly to the last moments of her life. Religion and resignation smoothed its close. Two of the Archduchesses, her daughters Maria and Elizabeth, who remained unmarried, constantly attended about her bed; but I have been assured that they could not prevail on their mother, though they earnestly entreated it, even a short time preceding her dissolution, to bequeath her blessing to the Archduchess Amelia, their sister. That princess, who had been married to Don Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, was supposed to have committed great irregularities of every kind. Only a short time before Maria Theresa breathed her last, having apparently fallen into a sort of insensibility, and her eyes being closed, one of the ladies near her person, in reply to an inquiry made respecting the state of the Empress, answered that her Majesty seemed to be asleep. "No," replied she, "I could sleep, if I would indulge repose, but I am sensible of the near approach of death, and I will not allow myself to be surprised by him in my

sleep. I wish to meet my dissolution awake." There is nothing transmitted to us by antiquity more impressive than this answer, which appears divested of all ostentation. Voltaire himself, cynic as he was, and always severe upon crowned heads, unless when mollified by the flattering letters or presents of Catherine II., must have admired it. Even the great Frederick, who survived Maria Theresa near six years, though he encountered the gradual advances of death with philosophy and fortitude, yet betrayed much reluctance, displayed some peevishness, and perhaps manifested a little affectation or vanity, in the preparations which he made for his departure. We may see the proofs of it in his conversations with Zimmerman. Neither Augustus, nor Vespasian, nor Adrian, though each of these Emperors seems to have contemplated death with a steady countenance, and almost with a smiling look, yet manifested more perfect self-possession in the last act of life than did Maria Theresa. She was as much superior in virtue to her contemporary, Catherine II., as she fell beneath that princess in brilliancy of talents. In the arts of reigning, in courage, in benignity of disposition, and in solid endowments of understanding, the Austrian may dispute for superiority even with the Russian Czarina. Posterity will perhaps confer more admiration on the latter Empress, but must reserve its moral approbation and esteem for the former sovereign.





## PART THE SECOND.

—o—

JANUARY 1781.



AM now arrived in the course of these memoirs at the beginning of the year 1781. Before, however, we enter on the political events of that disastrous period, it seems indispensable that we should survey the character of the sovereign, of the Cabinet Ministers, of the leaders of Opposition, and the principal persons in both Houses of the new Parliament. Great Britain did not then present the same august, majestic, and interesting spectacle to mankind which we have since exhibited, even during the most calamitous moments of the late revolutionary war. The empire under Lord North's administration was shaken and convulsed in almost every quarter. Domestic faction pervaded all the departments of Government, infected the navy, and manifested itself in every debate of either House of Parliament. The English were discontented, the Scots were sullen, and the Irish had become clamorous for political as well as for commercial emancipation. A Ministry, the members of which body did not always act in union, and still prosecuting a

hopeless contest with America, whatever ability the individuals composing it might separately possess, yet inspired no public confidence in the success of their future measures. National credit began to droop under the expenses of a war carried on across the Atlantic at an immense distance, while the commerce of the country suffered at least in an equal degree from the depredations of the enemy. Nor had Lord North provided, as Mr. Pitt afterwards did in 1786, any *sinking fund* for the gradual extinction of the taxes which he annually imposed.

Amidst this scene of distress, the great Continental powers of the North and East of Europe looked on, either as unconcerned spectators or as secret enemies. Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, who had recently succeeded to the Bohemian and Hungarian thrones, imitating in this instance his mother's line of policy, and occupied with domestic reforms of various kinds, took indeed no open part ; but, connected as he was with France by his sister's marriage to Louis XVI., his inclinations might be supposed to lean towards the House of Bourbon. The great Frederick, sinking in years as well as under the pressure of diseases and infirmities, satiated with military fame, attentive principally to the improvement of his dominions and the augmentation of his revenue, always attached from disposition to the manners, language, and crown of France, beheld with satisfaction the augmenting difficulties of the English Government. He had never forgiven Lord Bute for retaining, when first Minister, the subsidy claimed by Prussia in 1762, and he nourished a dislike to the country which, as he perhaps justly conceived, had broken its faith with him on so important a point. Catherine II., ever anxious to throw a veil of glory over the tragical circumstances which placed her on the Russian throne by aggran-

dising the Russian Empire, and availing herself with ability of the distress of England, then contending against so many adversaries, set up pretensions to a maritime exemption from the right of search on the high seas, claimed and exercised by Great Britain in time of war. Placing herself<sup>1</sup> at the head of the Baltic Powers in union with the Courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm, which on this occasion made common cause with her, she attempted to emancipate their navies from any further submission to the British flag. Lord North, unable to resent or to oppose the policy of Catherine by open force, temporised, and waited for more propitious times. Portugal alone amidst the general hostility or defection of Europe ventured to manifest her amicable disposition, and had the generosity to refuse to form a junction with the Baltic Confederacy, or to accede to the armed neutrality of the Northern States.

The King at this period of his reign was far advanced in his forty-third year. Though he came into the world at the term of seven months, a fact which is indisputable, as the late Duchess of Brunswick his sister's birth took place on the 11th of August 1737, and that of his Majesty on the 4th of June 1738, yet nature had conferred on him a sound and vigorous frame of body. He was born in Norfolk House, St. James's Square, where Frederick,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The duplicity and deliberate falsehood, not only of Catherine "Slay Czar," as Walpole called her, but of her Ministers, will be found detailed in Lord Malmesbury's Memoirs. Under date of the 11th May 1778 he writes from St. Petersburg in reference to the hostility of the Russians against England: "The time will probably come when they will stand in much greater need of us than we ever can of them;" a sentence which has now the force of an accomplished prophecy.—D.

<sup>2</sup> When the Prince was ordered to quit St. James's, he rented this house of the Duke of Norfolk, and inhabited it while Carlton House was prepared for his reception. The old house still exists behind the one that fronts the square, which was built after the designs of R. Brettingham in 1742.—ED.

Prince of Wales, then resided, who had been peremptorily ordered only a short time before to quit St. James's Palace by George II. I saw, not much more than a year ago, the identical bed in which the Prince was born, now removed to the Duke of Norfolk's seat of Worksop, in the county of Nottingham; and it forcibly proves the rapid progress of domestic elegance and taste within the last eighty years. Except that the furniture is of green silk, the bed has nothing splendid about it, and would hardly be esteemed fit for the accommodation of a person of ordinary condition in the present times. A course of systematic abstinence and exercise had secured to George III. the enjoyment of almost uninterrupted health down to the time of which I speak. So little had he been incommoded by sickness or by indisposition of any kind from the period of his accession till his memorable seizure in 1788, that scarcely was he ever compelled to absent himself on that account from a levée, a council, or a drawing-room during eight-and-twenty years. One only exception to this remark occurred in the autumn of 1765, when he was attacked by a disorder that confined him for several weeks; relative to the nature and seat of which malady, though many conjectures and assertions have been hazarded in conversation, and even in print, no satisfactory information has ever been given to the world.

In the King's countenance a physiognomist would have distinguished two principal characteristics: firmness, or, as his enemies denominated it, obstinacy, tempered with benignity. The former expression was, however, indisputably more marked and prominent than the latter sentiment. Fox, when addressing the House of Commons, did not hesitate to allude in very intelligible language to his obstinacy. I remember, in January 1782, on his moving for papers in order to



institute an inquiry into Lord Sandwich's<sup>1</sup> conduct at the head of the Admiralty, Fox observed, "It is said by the very members of this assembly who, in case of a division, will vote in favour of the Earl of Sandwich, that there is *an obstinacy somewhere* which will oppose whatever measure is suggested from this side of the House. . . . I cannot pretend to say whether such a *spirit of obstinacy* does or does not exist, but those men who really think the present First Lord of the Admiralty unfit for his situation, and yet come down to vote for maintaining him in office, are unfit for the important trust of representatives of a free people." I believe there was no person present so obtuse as not to understand the application of Fox's expressions. The King seemed to have a tendency to become corpulent, if he had not repressed it by habitual and unremitting temperance. On this subject I shall relate a fact which was communicated to me by a friend, Sir John Macpherson, who received it from the great Earl of Mansfield, to whom the King himself mentioned it, forcibly demonstrating that strength of mind, renunciation of all excesses, and dominion over his appetites, which have characterised George III. at every period of his life. Conversing with William, Duke of Cumberland,<sup>2</sup> his uncle, not long before that Prince's death, in 1765, his Majesty observed that it was with concern he remarked the Duke's augmenting corpulency. "I lament it not less, sir," replied he, "but it is constitutional, and I am much mistaken if your Majesty will not become as large as myself before you attain to my age." "It arises from your not using sufficient exercise," answered the King. "I use, neverthe-

<sup>1</sup> John, fourth Earl, born in 1718. He was the personal enemy of Admiral Keppel and the supporter of Palliser. He died in 1792.—D.

<sup>2</sup> The favourite son of Queen Caroline, consort of George II., and the so-called "hero of Culloden."—D.

less," said the Duke, "constant and severe exercise of every kind. But there is another effort requisite in order to repress this tendency which is much more difficult to practise, and without which no exercise, however violent, will suffice. I mean great renunciation and temperance. Nothing else can prevent your Majesty from growing to my size." The King made little reply, but the Duke's words sunk deep and produced a lasting impression on his mind. From that day he formed the resolution, as he assured Lord Mansfield, of checking his constitutional inclination to corpulency by unremitting restraint upon his appetite, a determination which he carried into complete effect in defiance of every temptation.

Perhaps no sovereign of whom history, ancient or modern, makes mention in any age of the earth has exceeded him in the practice of this virtue. It is a fact that during many years of his life, after coming up from Kew or from Windsor, often on horseback and sometimes in heavy rain, to the Queen's house, he has gone in a sedan-chair to St. James's, dressed himself, held a levée, passed through all the forms of that long and tedious ceremony, for such it was in the way that he performed it, without leaving any individual in the circle unnoticed, and has afterwards assisted at a Privy Council, or given audience to his Cabinet Ministers and others, till five, and even sometimes till six o'clock. After so much fatigue of body and of mind, the only refreshment or sustenance that he usually took consisted of a few slices of bread and butter and a dish of tea, which he sometimes swallowed as he walked up and down, previous to getting into his carriage in order to return into the country. His understanding, solid and sedate, qualified him admirably for business, though it was neither of a brilliant, lively, nor imposing description. But his manner did

injustice to the endowments of his intellect, and, unfortunately, it was in public that these minute personal defects or imperfections became most conspicuous. Dr. Johnson, indeed, thought otherwise on the subject; for, after the conversation with which his Majesty was pleased to honour that great literary character in the library of the Queen's house in February 1767, he passed the highest encomiums on the elegant manners of the sovereign. Boswell, in Johnson's Life, speaking of this circumstance, adds, "He said to Mr. Barnard, the librarian, 'Sir, they may talk of the King as they will, but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen.' And he afterwards observed to Mr. Langton, 'Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Louis XIV. or Charles II.'"

Independent of the effect necessarily produced on Johnson's mind by so unexpected and flattering a mark of royal condescension, which may well be imagined to have operated most favourably on the opinions of the moralist, he was perhaps of all men the least capable of estimating personal elegance of deportment. His vast intellectual powers lay in another line of discrimination. Had Johnson been now living, he might indeed witness the finest model of grace, dignity, ease, and affability which the world has ever beheld united in the same person. In *him* are really blended the majesty of Louis XIV. with the amenity of Charles II.<sup>1</sup> But George III. was altogether destitute of these ornamental and adventitious endowments.<sup>2</sup> The oscillations of his body, the precipitation of his questions, none of which, it

<sup>1</sup> George, Prince Regent, afterwards George IV.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Adams, the American envoy, however, expressed a different opinion. He said, "The King is, I really think, the most accomplished courtier in his dominions. With all the affability of Charles II. he has all the domestic virtues and regularity of Charles I."—*Works of John Adams*, vol. viii. p. 358.—ED.

was said, would wait for an answer, and the hurry of his articulation afforded, on the contrary, to little minds or to malicious observers, who only saw him at the drawing-room (or, as the Duchess of Chandos called it, the *drawling* room), occasion for calling in question the soundness of his judgment and the strength of his faculties. None of his Ministers, however, and Mr. Fox, if possible, less than any other, entertained such an opinion. His whole reign forms, indeed, the best answer to the imputation. That he committed many errors, nourished many prejudices, formed many erroneous estimates, and frequently adhered too pertinaciously to his determinations, where he conceived, perhaps falsely, that they were founded in reason or in justice—all these allegations may be admitted. Nor can the injurious effects to himself and to his people, necessarily flowing in various instances from such defects of character and of administration, be altogether denied. But these infirmities, from which no man is exempt, cannot impugn his right to the affectionate veneration of posterity for the inflexible uprightness of his public conduct; and as little can they deprive him of the suffrages of the wise and good of every age, who will bear testimony to the expansion of his mind and the invariable rectitude of his intentions.

It would indeed be difficult for history to produce an instance of any prince who has united and displayed on the throne during near half a century so many personal and private virtues. In the flower of youth, unmarried, endowed with a vigorous constitution, and surrounded with temptations to pleasure or indulgence of every kind when he succeeded to the crown, he never yielded to these seductions. Not less affectionately attached to the Queen than Charles I. was to his consort Henrietta Maria, he remained, nevertheless, altogether exempt from the

uxoriousness which characterised his unfortunate predecessor, and which operated so fatally in the course of his reign.

Wilkes, in the papers of the "North Briton," and "Junius," always affected, by drawing comparisons between the two kings, to demonstrate the moral resemblance that existed between them; but the pretended similarity was only external, in matters of mere deportment, not of solid character. It must be apparent to every impartial person who studies their respective reigns and lines of political action how superior was George III. to Charles on the three great points that constitute the essential differences between men. The first of these qualities was firmness of mind. To his weakness, not even to give it a more severe epithet, in abandoning Lord Strafford to the rage of his enemies, we may trace all the misfortunes that accompanied Charles from that time down to the close of life, misfortunes aggravated by the reproaches of his own conscience for delivering up his Minister a victim to popular violence. His present Majesty neither deserted Lord Bute when most unpopular, in 1763, nor the Duke of Grafton amidst the tumults of March 1769, nor Lord North in the more awful riots of June 1780. As little did he turn his back on Lord George Germain after the defeats of Saratoga or of Yorktown, amidst the disasters of the American war. Far from recurring for support to his Ministers, he constantly extended it to them, and never shrunk from personal risk, responsibility, or odium. His conduct on the memorable 7th of June 1780, both at the council table and during the course of that calamitous night which followed, will best exemplify the assertion. Charles, though personally brave in the field, and perfectly composed on the scaffold, was deficient in political courage,

steadiness of temper, and tenacity of determination. These qualities formed the distinguishing characteristics of George III., who seems, when assailed by misfortunes, to have taken as his motto the sentiment of the Roman poet—

“Tu ne cede malis; sed contra, audentior ito.”

Nor does the balance incline less in his favour when compared with his predecessor of the Stuart line in the article of judgment. If any act of his present Majesty's reign or government may seem to bear an analogy to the intemperate, vindictive, and pernicious attempt of Charles to seize on the five members of the House of Commons, it was the order issued by a general warrant<sup>1</sup> to take Wilkes into custody. Nor shall I undertake the defence of that proceeding, which I have always considered as the least justifiable measure in every sense embraced since the King's accession to the throne. But when he authorised it in April 1763, he had not completed his twenty-fifth year. Charles I. was above forty at the time of his committing the rash act in question. That George III., if he had ever been reduced to take up arms against his subjects, might, from the partialities of parental affection, have committed an error similar to that of Charles when he intrusted the command of his forces to Prince Rupert, I will even admit to be probable, reasoning from the internal evidence afforded by the campaigns of 1793, 1794, and 1799. But no man who has followed the whole chain of events from 1760 down to 1810 can hesitate in pronouncing that under circumstances the most appalling to the human mind,

<sup>1</sup> A general warrant empowered those intrusted with its execution to seize not only any person or number of persons, but also their respective papers, without any specification of the names of the accused or of the crimes with which they were charged. These warrants were declared to be illegal by Lord Chief Justice Pratt, 6th December 1763.—ED.

demanding equal fortitude and intellectual resources, he has displayed a degree of ability that we would vainly seek in the Stuart king's unfortunate administration, terminated by the scaffold.

It is, however, in moral principle and good faith that the superiority of the one sovereign over the other becomes most irresistible, and forces the completest conviction. "Charles I.," says Junius, "lived and died a hypocrite." However severe we may esteem this sentence, we cannot contest that his insincerity formed a prominent feature of his character, and eminently conduced to his destruction. It was proved by a variety of facts, and it unquestionably deterred Cromwell, as well as others of the republican leaders, from exhibiting or anticipating the conduct of Monk. Unable to trust his most solemn assurances, they found no security for themselves except in bringing him to the block. But George III. exhibited a model of unshaken fidelity to his engagements, even those most repugnant to his own feelings and most contrary to his own judgment. I could adduce many proofs of the fact. How magnanimous was his reception and treatment of Adams in 1783—a man personally obnoxious—when presented to him at his levée as envoy from the American States! In terms the most conciliating, yet nobly frank, he avowed to that Minister with what reluctance he had consented to the separation of the Transatlantic British colonies from his dominion; "but," added he, "their independence being now consummated, I shall be the last man in my kingdom to encourage its violation."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Adams, the first envoy from the United States, was presented to George III. at St. James's Palace on 1st of June 1785, and he has left us his own account of the interview. The last words of the King's speech were these: "I was the last to consent to the separation, but the separation having been made and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power" (Works of J. Adams, vol. viii. p. 257).—ED.

He acted in a similar manner when the preliminaries of peace were signed in 1801 with France. No measure of state in the power of Ministers to adopt could have been, under the existing circumstances, less consonant to his ideas of safety, policy, and wisdom—a fact of which the Cabinet was so perfectly aware, that Lord Hawkesbury<sup>1</sup> affixed his signature to the articles, not only without the King's consent or approbation, but without his knowledge. It took place, as is well known, on the 1st of October, just as he was about to return from Weymouth to Windsor. The Cabinet instantly sent off a messenger with the intelligence, who met the King at Andover, and the packet was brought to him as he stood in the drawing-room of the inn, engaged in conversation with the late Earl of Cardigan<sup>2</sup> and two other noblemen, the Earl of Chesterfield<sup>3</sup> and Lord Walsingham.<sup>4</sup> His Majesty, not expecting to receive any news of importance, ordered them not

<sup>1</sup> The writer in the "Quarterly Review," xiii. 210, misstates this passage, and then says, "This is neither more nor less than a downright falsehood."—ED. In May 1802, Lord Malmesbury writes: "Addington and Lord Hawkesbury dread alliances, think commercial treaties useless, and seem to have filled their minds on foreign connections with the silliest and most dangerous ideas."—D. Lord Hawkesbury was afterwards second Lord Liverpool.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> James, fifth Earl of Cardigan, born 1725. He succeeded his brother George, Duke of Montague, in the Earldom of Cardigan, A.D. 1790. He died in 1811, and was succeeded by his nephew.—D.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Stanhope, "the Sturdy." He was the godson, distant relation, and successor of the "great" Earl of Chesterfield, who died childless in 1773. The latter declared in his will that if his successor should keep racehorses or hounds, resort to Newmarket Races, or lose £500 in one day by gambling, he should forfeit £5000 to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. He despised the latter for the hard bargain they drove with him when he wanted land on which to build Chesterfield House, and he named them in his will, he said, because if the penalty should be incurred, they would not be slow in claiming it. Philip "the Sturdy," fifth Earl, died in 1815.—D.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas, second Lord Walsingham, born 1748, was the son of William De Grey, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and first Lord Walsingham. Thomas succeeded to the title in 1781. During twenty years he was Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords. He died in 1818.—D.



to leave the apartment, as they were preparing to do, in order that he might have time to peruse the dispatch. But, on inspecting its contents, he betrayed so much surprise, both in his looks and gesture, that they were again about to retire. The King then addressed them, and holding the letter open in his hand, "I have received surprising news," said he, "but it is no secret. Preliminaries of peace are signed with France. I knew nothing of it whatever; but, since it is made, I sincerely wish it may prove a lasting peace."

Louis XII., King of France, surnamed in history "the father of his people," is said to have observed, that "if good faith were banished from among men, it should be found in the bosoms of princes." This sublime maxim or sentiment seems to have been inherent in the intellectual formation of George III. His coronation oath was ever present to his mind, and he dreaded the slightest infraction of that solemn compact made with his people, to which the Deity had been invoked as a party, far more than the loss of his crown or life. When Mr. Pitt, sustained by four of the Cabinet Ministers, made the experiment of forcing him to violate it on the 29th of January 1801, relative to the question of "Catholic Emancipation in Ireland," they unquestionably did not expect nor intend to go out of office, though they sent in their respective resignations.<sup>1</sup> But having compelled the King no less than four times in the course of a few years to give way on points where the majority of his Cabinet differed from him, they erroneously assumed that he would act in the same manner where his conscience was concerned. Sus-

<sup>1</sup> "This assertion we have reason to know is untrue. That Mr. Pitt's resignation was on his part a deliberate measure, and distinctly stated in a letter from himself to the King as a determined one, is known to all the partakers of his counsels at that time, almost every one of whom is still living."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 210.—ED.

tained, however, by his principles, he did not hesitate a moment in accepting their resignation, though he accompanied the acceptance with the most flattering testimonies under his hand of esteem and personal attachment.<sup>1</sup> Uninstructed by such a warning, Lord Grenville,<sup>2</sup> who had been one of the five Cabinet members alluded to above, aided by Lord Grey, repeated the attempt six years later, after Fox's decease, with similar success. Charles I. did not manifest the same religious respect for the sanctity of his oaths and engagements. If his enemies in Parliament and in the field could have reposed the unlimited confidence in him which George III. challenged from his opponents, that unhappy prince might have died in his bed at Whitehall.

I will subjoin only one anecdote more on a point so interesting, which vitally characterises the present King. Towards the end of the month of January 1805, at a time when he was much occupied in preparations for the installation of the Knights of the Garter, destined to take place on the approaching 23d of April, and while conversing on the subject with some persons of high rank at Windsor, one of them, the late Earl of Chesterfield,<sup>3</sup> a nobleman much distinguished by his favour, said, "Sir, are not the new knights, now meant to be installed, obliged to take the sacrament before the ceremony?" Nothing could probably have been farther from his idea or intention than to have asked the question in a manner capable of implying any levity or irreverence. Nevertheless, his Majesty instantly changed countenance, and assuming a severe look, after a moment or two of

<sup>1</sup> The Addington Ministry succeeded, and held office from 1801 to 1804.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Head of "ALL THE TALENTS" Administration.—D.

<sup>3</sup> The fifth Earl. See *ante*.

pause, "No," replied he, "that religious institution is not to be mixed with our profane ceremonies. Even at the time of my coronation, I was very unwilling to take the sacrament. But when they told me that it was indispensable, and that I must receive it, before I approached the communion table I took off the bauble from my head. The sacrament, my Lord, is not to be profaned by our Gothic institutions."<sup>1</sup> The severity of the King's manner while he pronounced these words impressed all present, and suspended for a short time the conversation. Never was any prince more religiously tenacious of his engagements or promises. Even the temporary privation of his intellect did not affect his regard to the assurances that he had given previous to such alienation of mind, nor, which is still more wonderful, obliterate them from his recollection. I know that on his recovery from the severest visitations under which he has laboured, he has said to his Minister in the first moments of his convalescence, "Previous to my attack of illness I made such and such promises; they must be effectuated." How strong a moral principle must have animated such a prince!

The education of George III. had not by any means been conducted or superintended with as much care as his birth and the great prospects to which he was heir should unquestionably have claimed from his predecessor. He was only between twelve and thirteen years of age when he lost his father, and the late King did not extend any very enlightened or affectionate attention to that important national object. Even his mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, appears to have been deeply sensible to the inefficiency of the

<sup>1</sup> This argument of the King's might just as well have been advanced by him against the Test Acts.—ED.

various preceptors successively employed about her son. Other charges, of a still more serious nature, were preferred against some of the individuals intrusted with the formation of his principles, or who had constant access to him, accusing them of endeavouring to imbue him with arbitrary notions, and of placing in his hands authors known to have inculcated tyrannical maxims of government. These accusations, destitute of proof, and denied in the most positive manner at the time when they were made, in 1752 or 1753, by the Princess Dowager, rest on no solid foundations. If we wish to contemplate a portrait of the young Prince of Wales at seventeen years of age, drawn by his own mother in August 1755, and communicated confidentially to a friend, we have it in Dodington's "Diary." She said that "he was shy and backward; not a wild, dissipated boy, but good-natured and cheerful, with a serious cast upon the whole; that those about him knew him no more than if they had never seen him; that he was not quick, but with those he was acquainted, applicable and intelligent. His education had given her much pain. His book-learning she was no judge of, though she supposed it small or useless; but she hoped he might have been instructed in the general understanding of things." It is impossible to doubt the accuracy and fidelity of this picture, however coarse may be the colours. Many features of it continued indelible throughout his whole reign.

In modern history George III. was tolerably well instructed, particularly in the annals of England and of France, as well as of Germany; but in classical knowledge and all the compositions of antiquity, either Grecian or Roman, historical as well as poetic, he was little conversant. So slight or imperfect was his acquaintance with Latin, that

at forty it may be doubted if he could have construed a page of Cicero or of Ovid. He never delighted indeed in those elegant branches of study, nor ever passed much of his time in sedentary occupations calculated to improve his mind after his accession to the crown. A newspaper, which he commonly took up after dinner, and over which, however interesting its contents might be, he usually fell asleep in less than half an hour, constituted the ordinary extent of his application. Nor ought we to wonder at this circumstance if we consider how numerous were his avocations, and how little leisure the necessary perusal of public papers, dispatches, and letters, could have left him for literary research. If, however, he did not possess a very cultivated understanding, he might nevertheless be justly considered as not deficient in accomplishments befitting his high station. He conversed with almost equal fluency, as all those persons who frequented the levee or the drawing-room could attest, in the English, French, and German languages; nor was he ignorant of Italian. He wrote with brevity, perspicuity, and facility. I have had opportunities to see or hear various of his confidential notes, addressed, during the period of the American war, to a nobleman high in office, some of which were written under very delicate circumstances. In all of them good sense, firmness, principle, consistency, and self-possession were strongly marked through every line. In mechanics of all kinds he delighted and indulged himself, a relaxation which seems somewhat unjustly to have excited much animadversion and still more ridicule. But it cannot be denied that during this period of his reign, and down to a later stage of it, the English people—for I will not say the Scotch—viewed all the failings of their sovereign with a microscopic eye, while they did

injustice to his numerous excellences. They, however, made him full amends since 1783 for their preceding severity.

For painting and architecture he showed a taste the more admired as his two immediate predecessors on the throne, altogether destitute of such a quality, extended neither favour nor protection to polite letters. Since Charles I. no prince had expended such sums in the purchase of productions of art, or so liberally patronised artists of every kind. Music always constituted one of his favourite recreations; and, with the predilection natural to a German, he manifested great partiality for the compositions of Handel. Towards this time of his life he began likewise to take a pleasure in hunting, for which diversion he had not betrayed in his youth so much inclination. But another occupation or passion, which, from its beneficial tendency and results, as well as from the tranquil enjoyments annexed to it, might seem peculiarly analogous to his character and disposition, employed much of his thoughts and no considerable portion of his leisure. I mean farming and agricultural pursuits. He may be said to have shown the way and to have set the example which has been since imitated by the late Duke of Bedford, Mr. Coke, Lord Somerville, Sir John Sinclair, and so many other distinguished persons. Even this inclination, however productive of public benefit and laudable in all its results, yet exposed him to satirical reflections, which malignity or party spirit embodied in the form of caricatures.<sup>1</sup>

Satisfied with the legitimate power intrusted to him by the British constitution, and deeply impressed

<sup>1</sup> The caricatures of the King and Queen were numerous, and the former frequently appeared as "Farmer George." A caricature was published on the 21st November 1791 representing George III. and Queen Charlotte in the character of careful farmers "going to market."  
—ED.

with the sanctity as well as inviolability of the oath administered to him at his coronation, George III. did not desire to pass the limits of his rightful prerogative. "The King," said Lord North frequently, "would live on bread and water to preserve the constitution of this country. He would sacrifice his life to maintain it inviolate." I know that such was his opinion of his sovereign, and Lord North could not err in forming a judgment on the point. But equally tenacious of his just pretensions and firm in resisting popular violence or innovation, he never receded from any point or abandoned any measure under the impulse of personal apprehension. His courage was calm, temperate, and steady. It was constitutional and hereditary, but it was always sustained by conviction, sense of public duty, and religion. These sentiments inspired, accompanied, and upheld him in the most distressing moments of his reign. He had not, indeed, like George I., commanded armies and made campaigns in Hungary or on the Rhine, nor had he proved his valour in the field like George II., who fought at Oudenarde in his youth and at Dettingen in his age; but he possessed no less bravery than his ancestors, while he joined to personal steadiness a quality still more rare—political resolution. After the attempt made to assassinate him in 1787 by Margaret Nicholson,<sup>1</sup> an attempt which, though made by a maniac, yet only failed from the knife being worn so thin about the middle of the blade that it bent with the resistance of the King's waistcoat instead of entering his body, as it would otherwise have done, he immediately held his levee with the most perfect composure. No person who was present on that day at St. James's

<sup>1</sup> This attempt was made by Margaret Nicholson on the 2d August 1786, as the King was alighting from his carriage at the garden entrance to St. James's Palace.—ED.

could have supposed that he had just escaped from so imminent a danger.<sup>1</sup>

On the 29th of October 1795, when the pebble was thrown or discharged into the state coach in which he was proceeding to Westminster to open the session of Parliament,<sup>2</sup> while surrounded by a most ferocious mob, who manifested a truly Jacobinical spirit, he exhibited a calmness and self-possession prepared for every event. Few of his subjects would have shown the presence of mind and attention to everything except himself which pervaded his whole conduct on the evening of the 15th of May 1800, at the time that Hadfield discharged a pistol over his head in the theatre loaded with two slugs.<sup>3</sup> His whole anxiety was directed towards the Queen, who, not having entered the box, might, he apprehended, on hearing of the event, be over-

<sup>1</sup> As the King continued in town after the levee to preside at a meeting of the Privy Council, M. del Campo, the Spanish Minister, posted to Windsor, and taking advantage of his position to demand an audience with the Queen, kept her engaged in conversation until the King himself arrived to give his own account of the danger he had escaped. (Dutens' "Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement," vol. iv. p. 223, quoted in Jesse's "George III.," vol. ii. p. 533.)—ED.

<sup>2</sup> As the royal coach entered the space between New and Old Palace Yards, a small ball, either of lead or marble, passed through the glass window on the side where the King was seated, and passed through the opposite window, which happened to be open. The conduct of the mob was even worse on the return to St. James's. The glasses of the carriage were all broken, and several of the stones thrown at the carriage hit the King himself. (See Jesse's "George III.," vol. iii. pp. 213-215.)—ED.

<sup>3</sup> At Drury Lane Theatre. On the King coming forward to the front of the box to bow to the audience, a madman named James Hadfield discharged a horse-pistol at him. The audience were most excited, and demanded the National Anthem three times. On the second occasion Kelly sang the following stanza, composed by Sheridan on the spur of the moment :—

"From every latent foe,  
From the assassin's blow,  
God save the King !  
O'er him Thine arm extend,  
For Britain's sake defend  
Our father, prince, and friend.  
God save the King !" —ED.



come by her surprise or emotions. The dramatic piece<sup>1</sup> which was about to be represented commenced in a short space of time afterwards, precisely as if no accident had interrupted its performance; and so little were his nerves shaken or his internal tranquillity disturbed by it, that he took his accustomed doze of three or four minutes between the conclusion of the play and the commencement of the farce,<sup>2</sup> precisely as he would have done on any other night.<sup>3</sup> This circumstance, which so strongly indicated his serenity, did not escape the notice of his attendants, as I know from more than one of those noblemen or gentlemen who accompanied him on that evening to the theatre.

He received during the course of his reign innumerable anonymous letters threatening his life, all which he treated with uniform indifference. A nobleman who, I lament, is now no more, and who during many years was frequently about his person, as well as much in his confidence, the late Earl of Sandwich, assured me that he had seen several of them, which his Majesty showed him, particularly when at Weymouth. While residing there during successive seasons, he was warned, in the ambiguous manner already mentioned, not to ride out on particular days, on certain roads, if he valued his safety; but the King never failed to mount his horse and to take the very road indicated in the letter. Speaking on the subject to that nobleman he said, "I very well know that any man who chooses to sacrifice his own life may, whenever he pleases, take away mine, riding out, as I do continually, with a single equerry

<sup>1</sup> Colley Cibber's comedy "She would and she would not."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The "Humourist," by James Cobb.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> A contemporary commenting on this passage wrote as follows :—"I have been often at the theatre when the family was present. On these occasions his Majesty always *stood* some time between the play and afterpiece, much engaged in observing the audience through his opera-glass."—ED.

and a footman. I only hope that whoever may attempt it will not do it in a barbarous or brutal manner." When we reflect on his conduct under these circumstances, as well as during the tumults of March 1769<sup>1</sup> and the riots of June 1780, and if we contrast it with the weak or pusillanimous deportment of Louis XVI. in July 1789, when the French monarchy was virtually overturned; in October of the same year, at the time of his being carried prisoner from Versailles to Paris; or on the 10th of August 1792, when he abandoned the Tuilleries to seek refuge in the National Assembly,—we shall perceive the leading cause of the preservation of England and of the destruction of France. To George III., considered in his kingly capacity, might well be applied the assertion—

—"'Tis the last keystone  
That makes the arch."

He seemed as if raised up by Providence, in its bounty to mankind, like an impregnable mound to arrest the fury of revolution and Jacobinism. How can we wonder that such a prince should prefer Pitt, notwithstanding the inflexibilities of his character and the intractability of his natural disposition, for first Minister, rather than Fox, who was successively the eulogist of Washington, of Laurens, of La Fayette, of Condorcet, and all the saints or martyrs of French and American insurrection!

That George III. did not display those great energies of mind, those arts of condescending popularity, and that assemblage of extraordinary endowments which met in Elizabeth, and which rendered her at once the terror of Europe and the idol of her

<sup>1</sup> On the 22d March 1769 a cavalcade of merchants and tradesmen of the city of London, who were on their way to St. James's to present a loyal address, were stopped and pelted by a desperate mob. On the evening of the same day an Extraordinary Gazette was published with a proclamation for suppressing riots, tumults, &c.—ED.

own subjects, must be admitted. That he could not, like Charles II., balance the errors or the vices of his Government by the seduction of his manners, and induce his people, like that prince, to love his person though they condemned his conduct, we shall as readily confess. That he had not the advantage of being brought up amidst privations and mortifications of every kind like William III., nor was, like William, compelled, at his first entrance on public life, to extricate his country by arms from a powerful foreign invader ; that he did not nourish the profound ambition or develop the deep policy and active military spirit of that illustrious sovereign cannot be disputed. But if he was less distinguished by talents than William, he exhibited greater virtues. He resembled, indeed, in the leading features of his character, more the two Antonines than Trajan or Augustus, and excited greater respect than he awakened admiration. But ages may probably elapse before we shall again behold on the throne a prince more qualified, on the whole, to dispense happiness, and more justly an object of universal affection blended with esteem.

“Quo nihil majus meliusve terris,  
Fata donavere bonique Divi,  
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum  
Tempora priscum.”

If we compare him, as it is natural to do, either in his public capacity or in his private conduct, with his two immediate predecessors, who may nevertheless justly be considered, on a fair review of their characters, as amiable and respectable sovereigns, the comparison is highly flattering to George III. He possessed indeed some advantages not enjoyed by either of those princes. His birth, which took place in this island, and that complete assimilation with the people of England which

can only result from the joint effect of habits, language, and education, gave him a superiority over them and placed him upon higher ground. The two preceding kings were foreigners, who acceded or were called to the throne at an advanced period of life. George I. had attained his fifty-third, and George II. his forty-fourth year at their respective accessions. They naturally and necessarily considered Hanover as their native country, though fortune had transported them to another soil. Even their policy, their treaties, their wars, and all their measures were warped by foreign predilections, to which they too often sacrificed the interests of Great Britain. From these prejudices the King, who had never visited his electoral dominions, nor knew Germany except by description, was exempt in a considerable degree. Less impetuous and irascible than his grandfather, he possessed likewise a more capacious mind, more command of temper, and better talents for government than George II. In moderation, judgment, and vigor of intellect he at least equalled George I., while in every other quality of the heart or of the understanding he exceeded that monarch. In his private life, as a husband, a father, and a man, he was superior to either. The conduct of George I. in these relations will not indeed bear a severe inspection. His treatment of the unfortunate Sophia of Zell, his wife, whom he immured during the greater part of her life in a solitary Hanoverian castle, cannot be easily reconciled to the feelings of justice, or even of humanity. As little did he consult decorum or public opinion and morals in bringing over with him from Hanover to this country his two German mistresses, Sophia, Baroness Kilmanseck, and Melesina, Princess of Eberstein, whom he respectively created, the one Countess of Darlington, and the other Duchess of

Kendal. We may see in Walpole's "Reminiscences" how openly they were received in that character. Charles II. could not have observed less secrecy with respect to Lady Castlemaine or the Duchess of Portsmouth, nor have manifested less scruple about raising them to the dignity of the British peerage. Even at sixty-seven years of age, George I., it appears, was about to have formed a new connection of the same nature with Miss Brett,<sup>1</sup> when he was carried off by an apoplectic stroke.

His son and successor displayed indeed the utmost affection for his Queen, with whom he not only lived on terms of conjugal union, but whose loss he deplored with tears, and cherished the warmest respect for her memory. Yet he did not on that account restrain his inclinations for other women. Mrs. Howard,<sup>2</sup> who became afterwards Countess of Suffolk, and Madame de Walmoden, better known as Countess of Yarmouth,<sup>3</sup> the one previous and the other subsequent to Queen Caroline's decease, were both avowedly distinguished by the strongest marks of his predilection. The latter is accused by popular report of having made on more than one occasion a most unjustifiable use, or rather abuse, of her interest with the King. Even peerages

<sup>1</sup> Anne Brett, eldest daughter by her second husband (Colonel Henry Brett) of the notorious Countess of Macclesfield. She had apartments at St. James's Palace, and was to have been made a Countess on the return of George I. from Hanover. In 1737 she married Sir William Leman, Bart., of Northall.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Suffolk died in July 1767.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Amelia Sophia, wife of the Baron de Walmoden. She was mistress to the King before Queen Caroline's death. Walpole writes: "After the death of the Queen, Lady Yarmouth came over, who had been the King's mistress at Hanover during his later journeys, and with the Queen's privity, for he always made her the confidante of his amours, which made Mrs. Selwyn once tell him he should be the last man with whom she would have an intrigue, for she knew he would tell the Queen. In his letters to the latter from Hanover he said, 'You must love the Walmoden, for she loves me.'"—*Reminiscences of the Courts of George I. and II.*, chap. vii.—ED.

were said to be sold and distributed for her pecuniary benefit, a charge that has been revived from the Treasury Bench by a man high in office in our time. George III. exhibited a model of self-command and of continence at twenty-two than which antiquity, Greek or Roman, can produce nothing more admirable in the persons of Alexander or of Scipio. It is well known that before his marriage he distinguished by his partiality Lady Sarah Lennox,<sup>1</sup> then one of the most beautiful young women of high rank in the kingdom. Lord Holland, who had espoused her eldest sister, was supposed from obvious motives of interested ambition to lend every facility in his power to the young King's meeting Lady Sarah, as he passed near Holland House frequently during his morning excursions on horseback. In the hay season of the year 1761, she might often be seen in the fields bordering on the highroad near Kensington. Edward IV. or Henry VIII. in his situation, regardless of consequences, would have married her and placed her on the throne. Charles II., more licentious, would have endeavoured to seduce her; but the King, who, though he greatly admired her, neither desired to make her his wife nor his mistress, subdued his passion by the strength of his reason, his principles, and his sense of public duty. When we reflect on these circumstances, we may say with Horace, addressing ourselves to the British nation—

*"Quando ullum inveniet parem?"*

After having thus faithfully portrayed, though in the seeming language of panegyric, the character of George III., it is impossible, nevertheless, without violating truth, to deny that at this time, far from

<sup>1</sup> Lady Sarah Lennox, daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond, married in 1762 to Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, and afterwards to the Hon. George Napier.—ED.

being popular, he was not even an object of general affection. We may justly question whether Charles II., though one of the most unprincipled, profligate, and licentious sovereigns who ever reigned in this country, destitute of morals, sunk in dissolute pleasures, who tamely beheld his fleet burned by the Dutch in his own harbours, a pensioner of France, insensible to national glory, and regardless of the subjection of the Continent to Louis XIV., yet was ever so unpopular at any period of his reign.<sup>1</sup> In order to explain this seeming paradox and to show how a prince who apparently from his many private virtues should have possessed the attachment of his subjects, was nevertheless considered by a very large proportion of them with contrary sentiments, we must review the principal features of his Government. That retrospect will fully account for the circumstance, while it elucidates the events which followed the commencement of the year 1781.

To the confined plan of education and sequestered life which the King led subsequent to the death of his father before his own accession to the crown may be justly traced and attributed, at least in part, many of the errors as well as the misfortunes that mark the portion of the British annals from 1760 down to the close of the American war. During near ten years which elapsed between the demise of Frederick, Prince of Wales, early in 1751, and the decease of George II., a period when the human mind is susceptible of such deep impressions, he remained in a state of almost absolute seclusion from his future people and from the world. Constantly resident at Leicester House or at Carlton House when he was in London; immured at Kew

<sup>1</sup> Charles was never unpopular, and when he died, the grief of his subjects was widespread. The most worthless of our monarchs was the most regretted.—ED.

whenever he went to breathe the air of the country; perpetually under the eye of his mother and of Lord Bute, who acted in the closest unity of design, he saw comparatively few other persons, and those only chosen individuals of both sexes. They naturally obtained and long preserved a very firm ascendant over him. When he ascended the throne, though already arrived at manhood, his very person was hardly known, and his character was still less understood beyond a narrow circle. Precautions, it is well ascertained, were even adopted by the Princess Dowager to preclude, as much as possible, access to him—precautions which, to the extent of her ability, were redoubled after he became king. It will scarcely be believed, but it is nevertheless true, that, in order to prevent his conversing with any persons or receiving any written intimations, anonymous or otherwise, between the drawing-room and the door of Carlton House, when he was returning from thence to St. James's Palace, or to Buckingham House after his evening visits to his mother, she never failed to accompany him till he got into his sedan-chair. "Junius," in May 1770, after invidiously comparing Edward II. and Richard II. (two of the weakest or most misguided princes who ever reigned in this country) with George III., adds, when summing up the leading features of his character, "Secluded from the world, attached from his infancy to one set of persons and one set of ideas, he can neither open his heart to new connections nor his mind to better information. A character of this sort is the soil fittest to produce that obstinate bigotry in politics and religion which begins with meritorious sacrifice of the understanding, and finally conducts the monarch and the martyr to the block."

A prince who had been endowed by nature with



great energies of mind would, no doubt, have soon liberated himself from such fetters. Yet we may remember that Louis XIV., who, whatever faults he committed in the course of his long reign, must nevertheless always be considered as a sovereign of very superior intellectual endowments, remained under the tutelage of his mother and his Minister, of Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin, till even a later period of life than twenty-two. Nor did he then emancipate himself. It was death that, by carrying off the Cardinal, allowed the King to display those qualities which have rendered so celebrated his name and reign. A prince, on the other hand, of a gay, social, dissipated, or convivial disposition would equally have burst through these impediments. But pleasure of every kind, in the common acceptation of the term, as meaning dissipation, presented scarcely any attractions for him even previous to his marriage. Stories were indeed generally circulated of his attachment to a young woman, a Quaker,<sup>1</sup> about this time of his life, just as scandal many years afterwards whispered that he distinguished Lady Bridget Tollemache<sup>2</sup> by his particular attentions. The former report was probably well founded, and the latter assertion was unquestionably true, but those persons who have enjoyed most

<sup>1</sup> Her son by him is yet alive.—P. "The King was deeply enamoured of Lady Sarah Lennox, who married Sir Charles Bunbury, and many, many years afterwards Mr. Napier. The Duke of Richmond never forgave Lord Bute hindering his sister from being queen. The Duke said Wilkes ought to be encouraged, if it were only because he acted as a 'thorn in the King's side.'"—P.

Mr. Thoms has thoroughly investigated the whole story of Hannah Lightfoot, and clearly shown its inconsistencies. In fact, there is strong reason for doubting whether such a woman ever existed. Mr. Thoms's book was published in 1867, and is entitled "*Hannah Lightfoot; Queen Caroline and the Chevalier D'Eon; Dr. Wilmot's Polish Princess.*"—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Bridget Henley, daughter of Robert, first Earl of Northington, and wife of Captain the Hon. John Tollemache, R.N., third son of Lionel, third Earl of Dysart, K.T. She died 13th March 1796.

opportunities for studying the King's character will most incline to believe that in neither instance did he pass the limits of innocent gallantry or occasional familiarity. As little was he to be seduced by the gratifications of the table, of wine, or of festivity. To all these allurements he seemed disinclined from natural constitution, moral and physical. His brother, Edward, Duke of York, plunged, on the contrary, very early into every sort of excess; but the example produced no effect on a prince modest, reserved, continent, capable of great self-command, and seeking almost all his amusements within a narrow domestic circle.

Before he succeeded to the crown, Lord Bute constituted, in fact, almost his only constant companion and confidant. To him alone the heir-apparent unbosomed his thoughts; with him the Prince rode, walked, read, and conversed. They were on horseback together upon the 25th of October 1760, not far from Kew, when the intelligence of George II.'s sudden death reached him, confirmed immediately afterwards by Mr. Pitt in person, who then presided at the head of his Majesty's councils, or formed at least the soul of the Cabinet.<sup>1</sup> On receiving the information they returned to the palace, where the new King remained during the whole day and passed that night, not coming up to St. James's till the ensuing morning. Mr. Pitt having presented him a paper containing a few sentences which, he suggested, it might be proper for his Majesty to pronounce on meeting the privy council, the King, after thanking him, replied that he had already considered the subject of his intended address, to which he made a very important addition with his own hand, com-

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Newcastle was the nominal head of the Ministry.—ED.





J. Butte

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mented on with acrimonious pleasantry by Wilkes on account of its defective orthography. I mean the memorable declaration of his pride in the name of "*Briton*," or, as it was there written, "*Britain*." The Minister, who perceived that Lord Bute had anticipated him in the proposed address, made the unavoidable inference.<sup>1</sup> It was indeed sufficiently obvious that however his Administration might nominally continue for some time, yet his influence and authority were eclipsed or superseded.

Lord Bute, though in his private character, if not irreproachable in all respects, yet at least decorous and correct, nor by any means deficient in abilities, appears to have been, nevertheless, a very unfit governor for such a prince. There exists even no doubt that George II. opposed and disapproved his appointment to that important office; but the partiality and perseverance of the Princess Dowager prevailed over the old King's repugnance. The circumstance of Lord Bute's being a native of Scotland exposed him necessarily to malevolent attacks of many kinds; a fact at which we who live in the present century ought not to wonder when we reflect how few years then had elapsed since the rebellion of 1745. Wilkes and Churchill, the one in prose, the other in poetry, always levelled their keenest shafts against the mother and against the Minister of the young sovereign. His very virtues became matter of reproach, of ridicule, or of satire. "Junius," some years later, improving upon these first attempts to degrade him in the estimation of his subjects, condensed all the powers of declamation in his memorable "Letter to the King." Yet the nation at large, candid and just, appreciated him

<sup>1</sup> "These circumstances are inaccurate, and it is positively untrue that the speech was previously written. It was drawn up by Mr. Pitt; one sentence alone the King added with his own hand, 'Born a Briton,' &c."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 210.—ED.

fairly on his own merits. During the most gloomy periods of his reign, while they lamented or reprobated the measures of his various Administrations, from Lord Bute down to Lord North inclusive, with little variation or exception, they admitted his personal virtues to form no slender extenuation of his public errors or mistakes. His exemplary discharge of every private duty balanced in their estimate the misfortunes which his pertinacity, inflexibility, or injudicious selection of his confidential servants had entailed upon the country and upon the empire.

It is well known that George II. and his son, Frederick, Prince of Wales, during several years previous to the decease of the latter, lived on terms of complete alienation, or rather of hostility. Scarcely indeed were any measures observed, or was any veil drawn before their mutual recriminations. The Prince expired suddenly in the beginning of 1751 at Leicester House, in the arms of Desnoyers, the celebrated dancing-master, who being near his bedside engaged in playing on the violin for his Royal Highness's amusement, supported him in his last moments. His end was ultimately caused by an internal abscess that had long been forming in consequence of a blow which he received in the side from a cricket-ball,<sup>1</sup> while he was engaged in playing at that game on the lawn at Cliefden House in Buckinghamshire, where he then principally resided. It did not take place, however, for several months subsequent to the accident. A collection of matter having been produced, which burst in his throat, the discharge instantly suffocated him. The King, his father, though he never went to visit him during the whole progress of his illness, sent, however, constantly to make inquiries,

<sup>1</sup> This should be a tennis ball. See Lord Orford's account. "Annual Register," 1822, p. 558.—ED.

and received accounts every two hours of his state and condition. But he was so far from despairing altogether of Frederick's recovery, that, on the contrary, he considered such an event as highly probable down to the very evening on which his Royal Highness actually expired; for I know that only a short time preceding, the King, being engaged in conversation with the Countess of Yarmouth when the page entered announcing that the Prince was better, "There now," said his Majesty, turning to her, "I told you that he would not die." On the evening of his decease, the 20th of March, George II. had repaired, according to his usual custom, to Lady Yarmouth's apartments, situated on the ground floor in St. James's Palace, where a party of persons of distinction of both sexes generally assembled for the purpose. His Majesty had just sat down to play, and was engaged at cards, when a page dispatched from Leicester House arrived, bringing information that the Prince was no more. He received the intelligence without testifying any violent emotion. Then rising, he crossed the room to Lady Yarmouth's table, who was likewise occupied at play, and leaning over her chair, said to her in a low tone of voice in German, "*Fritz ist dode.*" Freddy is dead. Having communicated it to her, he instantly withdrew. She followed him, the company broke up, and the news became public. These particulars were related to me by the late Lord Sackville, who made one of Lady Yarmouth's party, and heard the King announce to her his son's decease.

Frederick seems never to have enjoyed, from his early youth, a distinguished place in the affection of his father, whose partiality was reserved for his youngest son, William, Duke of Cumberland. During the last twelve years of Frederick's life we know

that he passed much of his time in anticipations of his future sovereignty, and in forming Administrations, which, like his own reign, were destined never to be realised. Among the noblemen and gentlemen who occupied a high place in his favour or friendship were Charles, Duke of Queensberry, the patron of Gay, who died in 1778; Mr. Spencer, brother to the second Duke of Marlborough, and commonly called Jack Spencer; Charles, Earl Middlesex, afterwards Duke of Dorset, and his brother, Lord John Sackville, together with Francis, Earl of Guildford. The personal resemblance that existed between Lord North (son of the last-mentioned peer, who was subsequently First Minister) and Prince George was thought so striking as to excite much pleasantry on the part of Frederick himself, who often jested on the subject with Lord Guildford, observing that the world would think one of their wives had played her husband false, though it might be doubtful which of them lay under the imputation. Persons who may be disposed to refine upon the Prince's observation will perhaps likewise be struck with other points of physical similarity between George III. and Lord North; in particular, with the loss of sight, a privation common to both in the decline of life.

Lady Archibald Hamilton formed during many years the object of Frederick's avowed and particular attachment.<sup>1</sup> She resided in Pall-Mall, in

<sup>1</sup> She was mother to Archdeacon Hamilton, who lived his last years and died in the Circus here at Bath. He was very unhappy in his family, and when *one* observed accidentally on *another* friend's ill fortune—"Has he three children?" says poor Hamilton, "and are they like mine?"

"What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?"—*Lear*.

His mother was the Delamira of the "Tatler." His daughter is the Countess of Aldborough.—P.

Another note by Mrs. Piozzi, written at another time, is as follows:—"Mother of poor dear old Mr. Hamilton, who died here [Bath] in



the house afterwards occupied by the late Lord Sackville, very near to Carlton House, the Prince having allowed her to construct a drawing-room, the windows of which commanded over the gardens of that palace, and the house itself communicated with them. Towards men of genius his Royal Highness always affected to extend his protection. Glover,<sup>1</sup> the writer of "Leonidas," enjoyed his confidence, though we may justly doubt how much of it was given to him as a member of Parliament, the friend of Pulteney and of Pitt; how much was extended to him in his poetic capacity. The Prince showed uncommon deference for Pope, whom he visited at Twickenham,<sup>2</sup> a circumstance to which that author alludes with natural pride when, after enumerating the great or illustrious persons who honoured him with their regard and friendship, he subjoins—

"And if yet higher the proud list should end,  
Still let me add, no follower, but a friend."

In force of character, steadiness, vigour of mind, and the qualities that fit men for government, even his friends considered the Prince to be deficient. Nor was economy to be numbered among the virtues that he displayed, he having, before his decease, contracted debts to a large amount, which were never discharged. Even through the medium of Dodington's description, who was partial to Frederick's character and memory, we cannot conceive any very elevated idea of him. His court seems to have been the centre of cabal, the very cave of

the Circus a *very* few years ago. *He* was father to Lady Aldborough, yet living, and Jane Holman, lately dead. Prince Frederick was his godfather. I loved Jane Holman sincerely."

<sup>1</sup> Richard Glover, born 1712, died 1785.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> It is, however, related that Pope fell asleep at table on one occasion when the Prince was discoursing of poetry.—ED.

Æolus, torn by contending candidates for the guidance of his future imaginary reign. The Earl of Egmont and Dodington<sup>1</sup> himself were avowedly at the head of two great hostile parties. In November 1749 we find his Royal Highness in a secret conclave, held at Carlton House, making all the financial dispositions proper to be adopted on the demise of the King his father, and framing a new Civil List. At the close of these mock deliberations he binds the three assistants to abide by and support his plans, giving them his hand, and making them join hands with each other. The transaction, as narrated by Dodington, who was himself one of the party, reminds the reader of a similar convocation commemorated by Sallust, and is not unlike one of the scenes in "Venice Preserved."<sup>2</sup> It was performed, however, after dinner, which may perhaps form its best apology. The diversions of the Prince's court appear to us equally vulgar and puerile. Three times within thirteen months preceding his decease Dodington accompanied him and the Princess of Wales to fortune-tellers, the last of which frolics took place scarcely nine weeks before his death. After one of these magical consultations, apparently dictated by anxiety to penetrate his future destiny, but in answer to which inquiries the fortune-teller might have replied with Umbricius—

——"Funus promittere patris  
Nec volo, nec possum ;"

the party supped with Mrs. Cannon, the Princess's midwife. What must have been the manners of the times when Frederick used to go disguised to Hock-

<sup>1</sup> George Bubb Dodington, created Lord Melcombe in 1761, and died in the following year.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Otway's play.—ED.

ley-in-the-Hole to witness bull-baiting ?<sup>1</sup> Either Lord Middlesex or Lord John Sackville, father of the late Duke of Dorset, were commonly his companions on such expeditions. As far as we are authorised from these premises to form a conclusion, his premature death before he ascended the throne ought not to excite any great national regret, though Smollett has thought proper to represent it as a subject of universal lamentation.

George II., who survived the Prince near ten years, died at last not less suddenly than his son, at the advanced age of seventy-seven, a period attained by no sovereign in modern history except Louis XIV. A rupture in some of the vessels or in the membrane of the heart carried him off in a few minutes. During his whole life, but particularly for a number of years before his decease, he had been subject to such constant palpitations about the region of the heart, especially after dinner, that he always took off his clothes and reposed himself for an hour in bed of an afternoon. In order to accommodate himself to this habit or infirmity, Mr. Pitt, when, as Secretary of State, he was sometimes necessitated to transact business with the King during the time that he lay down, always knelt on a cushion by the bedside, a mark of respect which contributed to render him not a little acceptable to his Majesty. At his rising, George II. dressed himself completely a second time, and commonly passed the evening at cards with Lady Yarmouth in a select party. His sight had greatly failed him for some time preceding his decease. I have heard Mr. Fraser say, who was during many years Under Secretary of State, that in 1760, a few months be-

<sup>1</sup> Near Clerkenwell Green. Gay wrote—

“Both Hockley Hole and Marybone  
The combats of my dog have known.”—ED.

fore the King died, having presented a paper to him for his signature at Kensington (probably at a time when the Secretary of State was prevented by indisposition from performing that duty, or by some other indispensable cause which Fraser did not explain<sup>1</sup>), George II. took the pen in his hand, and after, as he conceived, affixing his name to it, returned it to Fraser. But so defective was his vision that he had neither dipped his pen in the ink, nor did he perceive that of course he had only drawn it over the paper without making any impression. Fraser, aware of the King's blindness, yet unwilling to let his Majesty perceive that he discovered it, said, "Sir, I have given you so bad a pen that it will not write; allow me to present you a better pen for the purpose." Then dipping it himself in the ink, he returned it to the King, who, without making any remark, instantly signed the paper.

He was unquestionably an honest,<sup>2</sup> well-intentioned, and good prince; of very moderate but not mean talents; frugal in his expenses from natural character; more inclined to avarice than any king of England since Henry VII.; irascible and hasty,

<sup>1</sup> "A duty which never by any chance could have devolved on Mr. Fraser or any other person in his situation; and yet this Sir Nathaniel vouches that he had from Mr. Fraser himself."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 210.

Sir Nathaniel's answer to this is:—"What! not in case of the Secretary of State's illness or necessary absence or dismissal, or under pressing circumstances, in order to expedite the despatch of public business? Do these reviewers know or recollect that on the 18th of December 1783, this same Mr. Fraser and Mr. Nepean (now Sir Evan), as Under Secretaries of State, by command of his present Majesty, brought and delivered up into the King's hand, not merely papers, but the seals of Lord North's and Mr. Fox's departments on their dismissal from office? It is evident that the editors of the *Quarterly Review* have either got out of their depth or have hoodwinked their own judgment and modulated their own opinions in submission to others."—*Answer to Calumnious Misrepresentations*, 1818, pp. 14, 15.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Nathaniel seems to have forgotten the story that George II. destroyed his father's will.—ED.

as well as capable of imbibing strong prejudices of many kinds, but not vindictive in his temper. Imbued with a strong enmity to France and as warm a predilection for Germany, he never enjoyed such felicity as when at Herenhausen, surrounded with his Hanoverian courtiers and subjects. William III. in like manner seemed to taste much more happiness while hunting at Loo, amidst the sterile sands of Guelderland, than at Whitehall or at Hampton Court. At the battle of Dettingen, in 1743, it is well known that George II.'s horse, which was unruly, ran away with him to a considerable distance. General Cyrus Trapaud, then an ensign, by seizing the horse's bridle, enabled his Majesty to dismount in safety. "Now that I am on my legs," said he, "I am sure I shall not run away." Having inquired Trapaud's name, the King always distinguished him afterwards in military promotions.<sup>1</sup> When incensed, either with his Ministers or with his attendants, he was sometimes not master of his actions, nor attentive to preserve his dignity. On these occasions his hat, it is asserted, even his wig, became frequently the objects on which he expended his anger.

Queen Caroline, by her address, her judicious compliances, and her activity of character, maintained, down to the time of her decease in 1737, a great ascendant over him. She formed the chief conducting wire between the sovereign and his First Minister. It is a fact that Sir Robert Walpole and her Majesty managed matters with so much art as to keep up a secret understanding by watch-words, even in the drawing-room, when and where George II. was present. According to the King's temper, frame of mind, or practicability on the

<sup>1</sup> He died at the advanced age of eighty-four, of a cancer on the tongue.—ED.

points which Sir Robert wished to carry, the Queen signified to him whether to proceed or to desist on that particular day. This communication was so well preconcerted, and so delicately executed, as to be imperceptible by the bystanders. Sir Robert lost a most able and vigilant ally when Queen Caroline died. Her decease was indeed a misfortune to her husband, to her children, and to the nation. She sacrificed her life to the desire of concealing her complaint,<sup>1</sup>—a rupture of the bowels,—which might have been easily reduced if she had not delayed the disclosure of it till a mortification took place. We have not possessed since Elizabeth's death a queen of more talent, capacity, and strength of understanding than Caroline of Brandenburg-Anspach. Anne of Denmark, wife of James I., was a woman of mean endowments, devoted to expensive pleasures, deficient in judgment, and of doubtful moral character. Henrietta Maria of Bourbon possessed great personal beauty, charms of conversation, and graces of deportment, but she was violent in her temper, of a narrow mind, bigoted in her attachment to the Roman Catholic faith, and conducted by her imprudent counsels to accelerate the ruin of Charles I. Catherine of Braganza, though a woman of virtue, wanted almost every attraction of mind or of body, and had received scarcely any education; while Mary of Modena, James II.'s queen, however agreeable in her person as well as correct in her conduct she might be, was superstitious to excess, and from that circumstance unfit to have been placed on the throne of England, though she might have adorned a little Italian court. Mary, consort of William III., approached the nearest to Queen Caroline, but did

<sup>1</sup> Horace Walpole says that Sir Robert obtained his ascendancy over the Queen by his discovery of the secret.—ED.

not equal her in mental endowments.<sup>1</sup> The last princess of the Stuart line, Anne, however amiable, virtuous, and blameless in private life, cannot enter into any competition with Caroline of Brandenburg-Anspach.

At the time of his decease, George II. certainly enjoyed great and universal popularity, but to Mr. Pitt, afterwards created Earl of Chatham, he was eminently indebted for this gratifying distinction at the close of life, when Victory was said to have erected her altar between his aged knees. The misfortunes and disgraces which preceded Pitt's entrance into office had in fact forced him upon the King, who, notwithstanding that Minister's recognised talents, did not employ him without the utmost reluctance. The inglorious naval engagement that took place in the Mediterranean between Byng and La Galissonière, for his conduct during which action the former of those admirals suffered death;<sup>2</sup> the consequent loss of Minorca; the defeat of General Braddock in Carolina; the repulse sustained before Ticonderoga; the ignominious capitulation of William, Duke of Cumberland, at Closter Seven, afterwards eluded or violated; and the disgraceful expedition against Rochfort,—these ill-concerted or ill-executed measures at the commencement of the war of 1756 had not only brought the Administration into contempt, but had much diminished the national affection borne towards

<sup>1</sup> Her letters are proofs of her taste, her tenderness, her plain sense, but wholly unadorned by literature. I mean Queen Mary's.—P.

<sup>2</sup> See "Retrospection," vol. ii. p. 423, near the bottom. "I had more grace than to name my own father and uncle in a quarto volume meant for public view; but I may tell *you* thus privately, and after more than half a century has passed, how my uncle (who was then Judge of the Admiralty) felt affected when the old Duke of Newcastle wrung him by the hand and said, 'My dear Sir Thomas, England has seen her best days. We are all undone. This d—— fellow has done for us, and all is over.'"—P.

the sovereign. From the period of Pitt's nomination to a place in the Cabinet success almost uniformly attended on the British arms. Though only occupying the post of Secretary of State, he directed, or rather he dictated, the operations at home and abroad. The Treasury, the Admiralty, the War Office, all obeyed his orders with prompt and implicit submission. Lord Anson and the Duke of Newcastle sometimes, it is true, remonstrated, and often complained, but always finished by compliance.<sup>1</sup> In the full career of Pitt's ministerial triumphs George II. died, an event which it is impossible not to consider as having been a great national misfortune when we reflect on the nature of the peace which took place little more than two years afterwards, in November 1762. Pitt, we may be assured, would have dictated far different terms to the two branches of the House of Bourbon. The new King did not indeed immediately dismiss so able and popular a statesman, but it was soon suspected that his Administration, though it might languish or continue for a few months, would not prove of long duration. Lord Bute had already secured the exclusive regard and favour of the young monarch.

The late Mrs. Boscowen, widow of the admiral of that name, so distinguished in our naval annals, whose connections enabled her to collect many curious facts in the course of a long life, has often assured me that Lord Bute's first personal introduction to the Prince of Wales originated in a very singular accident. That nobleman, as is well known, married the only daughter of the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montague, by whom he had a very

<sup>1</sup> Their compliance was submission of the most unqualified kind, and the patience with which they waited in the anteroom while Mr. Pitt was examining some machinery brought for his inspection by Nuttal, the engine-maker in Long Acre, was truly laughable.—P.



numerous family.<sup>1</sup> She brought him eventually likewise a large landed property ; but as her father, Mr. Wortley, did not die till the year 1761, and as her brother, the eccentric Edward Wortley Montague, lived to a much later period, I believe down to 1777, Lord Bute, encumbered with a number of children, found his patrimonial fortune very unequal to maintaining the figure befitting his rank in life. After passing some years in profound retirement on his estate in the Isle of Bute, he revisited England, and took a house on the banks of the Thames. During his residence there he was induced to visit Egham Races about the year 1747. But as he either did not at that time keep a carriage, or did not use it to convey him to the race-ground, he condescended to accompany a medical acquaintance, in other words, the apothecary who attended his Lordship's family, who carried him there in his own chariot.<sup>2</sup> Frederick, Prince of Wales, who then resided at Cliefden, honoured the races on that day with his presence, where a tent was pitched for his accommodation and the reception of the Princess, his consort. The weather proving rainy, it was proposed, in order to amuse his Royal Highness before his return home, to make a party at cards, but a difficulty occurred about finding persons of sufficient rank to sit down at the same table with him. While they remained under this embarrassment, somebody observed that Lord Bute had been seen on the race-ground, who, as being an Earl, would be peculiarly proper to make one of the Prince's party. He was soon found, informed of the occasion which demanded his attendance, brought to the tent, and presented to

<sup>1</sup> John, third Earl of Bute, K.G., born in 1713, married Mary, only daughter of Edward and Lady Mary Wortley Montague. On 4th April 1761 his wife was created Baroness Mountstuart of Wortley, Yorkshire, with remainder to her male issue by the Earl of Bute.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Curious, and I believe quite true.—P.

Frederick. When the company broke up, Lord Bute thought of returning back to his own house, but his friend the apothecary had disappeared, and with him had disappeared the chariot in which his Lordship had been brought to Egham Races. The Prince was no sooner made acquainted with the circumstance than he insisted on Lord Bute's accompanying him to Cliefden, and there passing the night. He complied, rendered himself extremely acceptable to both their Royal Highnesses, and thus laid the foundation, under a succeeding reign, of his political elevation, which flowed originally in some measure from this strange contingency.

Lord Bute during his youth possessed a very handsome person, of which advantage he was not insensible, and he used to pass many hours every day, as his enemies asserted, occupied in contemplating the symmetry of his own legs,<sup>1</sup> which were remarkably well made, during his solitary walks by the side of the Thames, unconscious of the great destinies that fortune reserved for him under George III. Even after he became an inmate at Cliefden and at Leicester House he frequently played the part of "Lothario" in the private theatricals exhibited for the amusement of their Royal Highnesses by the late Duchess of Queensberry. To this fact Wilkes alludes with malignant ridicule in his memorable letter of the "15th of March 1763," addressed to the Earl of Bute, where he says, "In one *part*, which was remarkably *humane* and *amiable*, you were so great that the general exclamation was, *Here you did not act*. In another *part* you were no less perfect; I mean in the famous scene of 'Hamlet,' where you pour *fatal poison into the ear* of a good unsuspecting King." Besides so many external accomplishments he possessed a cultivated mind,

<sup>1</sup> So I have heard.—P.

illuminated by a taste for various branches of the fine arts and letters. For the study of botany he nourished a decided passion, which he gratified to the utmost, and in the indulgence of which predilection he manifested on some occasions a princely liberality. Dr. Hill,<sup>1</sup> commonly denominated *Sir John*, after he had received the Swedish order of *Vasa* from Gustavus III., was one of the objects of his bounty. Nor did he fail in extending his protection and patronage to men of letters, but he manifested some national partiality in their selection. John Home, the author of "*Douglas*," a tragedy which attained a reputation superior to its merits, as well as Mallet or Malloch (for his name was differently written),<sup>2</sup> and Murphy,<sup>3</sup> all partook of the ministerial favour. I was intimately acquainted with Home, who courted the historic muse in his age, as he had done the muse of tragedy in his youth, but it cannot justly be asserted with more success. Yet his "*Account of the Rebellion of 1745*" is a superior production to his tragedy of "*The Fatal Discovery*," which proved, it was said, "*a fatal discovery indeed.*" James Macpherson ushered into the world some of the poems of Ossian under the immediate auspices of the First Lord of the Treasury.

Of a disposition naturally retired and severe, Lord Bute was not formed for an extensive commerce with mankind, or endowed by nature with talents for managing popular assemblies. Even in the interior of his family he was austere, harsh, difficult of access, and sometimes totally inaccessible to his own children. In the House of Lords he neither displayed eloquence nor gracious manners; but he proved himself likewise deficient in firmness, a

<sup>1</sup> Born 1716, died 1775.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> David Mallet, born 1700, died 1765.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Murphy, translator of "*Tacitus*," play-writer and actor, born 1727, died 18th June 1805.

quality still more essential for a First Minister. Yet with these defects of mind and of personal deportment he undertook to displace, and he aspired to succeed, a Minister who had carried the glory of the British arms to an unexampled height by sea and land. We cannot sufficiently regret that George III. should not have contented himself with heaping honours and dignities on him, carefully excluding him from any political employment. Few princes, however, of whom history preserves any record, have manifested at twenty-three a judgment so superior to the natural partialities of youth. Even Elizabeth, though she placed Cecil at the head of her councils, yet committed her armies successively to the conduct of her two favourites, the Earls of Leicester and Essex. The former merited the axe, by which the latter fell, whose want of prudence cost him his head. Leicester may be ranked with Bothwell.

After an administration of about two years, passed either in the post of Secretary of State or as First Lord of the Treasury, during which time he brought the war with France and Spain to a conclusion, Lord Bute, abandoning his royal master, quitted his situation and again withdrew to private life. No testimonies of national regret or of national esteem accompanied him at his departure from office. His magnificent house in Berkeley Square, though scarcely completed, exposed him to very malignant comments respecting the means by which he had reared so expensive a pile. His enemies asserted that he could not possibly have possessed the ability, either from his patrimonial fortune or in consequence of his marriage, to erect such a structure.<sup>1</sup> As little could he be supposed to have amassed

<sup>1</sup> No one now gives credit to the once credited reports that the mother of George III. and Lord Bute received bribes from France. The house in Berkeley Square (Lansdowne House) was sold to Lord Shelburne before it was quite completed.—D.

wherewithal during his very short administration to suffice for its construction. The only satisfactory solution of the difficulty, therefore, lay in imagining, however unjustly, that he had either received presents from France or had made large purchases in the public funds previous to the signature of the preliminaries. "Junius," addressing the Duke of Bedford, who signed that peace, in his letter of the "19th September 1769," written within seven years afterwards, charges the Duke in the most unequivocal terms with betraying and selling his country. "Your patrons," says he, "wanted an ambassador who would submit to make concessions without daring to insist upon any honourable condition for his sovereign. Their business required a man who had as little feeling for his own dignity as for the welfare of his country, and they found him in the first rank of the nobility. Belleisle, Goree, Guadaloupe, St. Lucia, Martinique, the Fishery, and the Havannah are glorious monuments of your Grace's talents for negotiation. My Lord, we are too well acquainted with your pecuniary character to think it possible that so many public sacrifices should have been made without some private compensations. Your conduct carries with it an internal evidence beyond all the legal proofs of a court of justice." Such an anonymous charge, however fascinating or energetic may be the language in which it is clothed, certainly ought not to be considered as proof; but no answer was ever made to it, either by the Duke or by any of his friends, if we except Sir William Draper's vague and unauthorised letter of the "7th of October 1769."

Dr. Musgrave, an English physician, who practised medicine at Paris in 1763, and whose name has been known in the republic of letters by the publication of some tragedies of Euripides, did not

scruple to assert publicly that the Princess Dowager of Wales and Lord Bute received money from the French Court for aiding to effect the peace.<sup>1</sup> I am acquainted with the individuals, gentlemen of the highest honour and most unimpeached veracity, to whom Dr. Musgrave himself related the circumstance at Paris in 1764, almost immediately after the treaty of Fontainebleau; and if I do not name them, it is only because they are still alive. Dr. Musgrave did not retract his accusation when he was examined at the bar of the House of Commons some years afterwards, in the month of January 1770, upon the same point. He maintained, on the contrary, his original assertion, which he supported by facts or circumstances calculated to authenticate its truth, though the House thought proper to declare it "frivolous and unworthy of credit." "Junius," writing in the month of May 1770, says, "Through the whole proceedings of the House of Commons in this session there is an apparent, a palpable consciousness of guilt, which has prevented their daring to assert their own dignity where it has been immediately and grossly attacked. In the course of Dr. Musgrave's examination he said everything that can be conceived mortifying to individuals or offensive to the House. They voted his information frivolous; but they were awed by his firmness and integrity, and sunk under it." Dr. Musgrave resided in this country during the last years of his life, and died, I believe, at Exeter in the summer of the year 1780.

Similar reflections, indeed, at different periods of our history, have been thrown not only upon

<sup>1</sup> "The original author of this scandal was Dr. Musgrave, a physician at Paris, whose examination at the bar of the House of Commons in 1770 is sufficient to convince any reader of tolerable understanding that he was a weak and credulous man."—*Edinburgh Review*, xxv. 208. Blackstone called him "an enthusiast of disturbed imagination."  
—ED.

Ministers, but even upon kings. Lord Clarendon, when Chancellor under Charles II., having, like Lord Bute, undertaken to build a magnificent house in London,<sup>1</sup> soon after the sale of Dunkirk to Louis XIV., about 1664, it was named by the people "Dunkirk House," on the supposition of its having been raised by French money. No person can doubt of Charles II. himself having received large sums from the Court of Versailles for purposes inimical to the interests of his people. So did his successor, James II. Bribes were even confidently said and believed to have been given to various of the courtiers or favourites of William III. from the East India Company and other corporate bodies, in order to procure the consent or approbation of the sovereign to the renewal of their charters. The Duchess of Kendal, mistress of George I., as well as Craggs, father of the Secretary of State of the same name, and himself at the time Postmaster-General,<sup>2</sup> together with other individuals about the court or person of that monarch, were either known or supposed to have been implicated in the transactions of the memorable South Sea year, 1720, when such immense sums were gained and lost in that ruinous speculation. Malignity did not spare the King himself, who, it was asserted, became a sharer in the acquisitions. Lord Bute, at the distance of half a century, is still believed by many persons to have rendered the treaty of Fontainebleau subservient to his private emolument ; a supposition which, however unjust or unmerited it may be, was again renewed twenty years later, at the conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Clarendon House, Piccadilly, was situated on the site of Albemarle Street, and looked down upon St. James's Street.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> James Craggs, the elder, began life as footman to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. He is supposed to have taken poison to escape from the inquiry respecting the defalcations of the South Sea directors.—ED.

of the peace of 1783, against Lord Shelburne with greater virulence and with bolder affirmations!<sup>1</sup> Such were the unfortunate results of the Earl of Bute's Ministry, which must be considered as having given the first blow to the popularity enjoyed by the King at his accession to the throne.

It is an indisputable fact that Lord Bute, terrified or disgusted at the indications of resentment shown towards him by the nation, forsook his master, and that he was not dismissed or abandoned by the sovereign. He was the first, though not the last, Minister who in the course of the present reign exhibited that example of timidity, or disgust, or desertion. But his ostensible relinquishment of office by no means restored to the King the confidence or the affection of his subjects. Even when nominally divested of power, Lord Bute was still supposed to direct unseen the wheels of government. However false and unfounded might be this imputation, and such I have ever considered it, yet it operated with irresistible force. A cry of secret influence arose, more pernicious in its effects throughout the country at large than even the open accusations lately levelled against the incapacity or pretended venality of the First Minister. The Grenville Administration<sup>2</sup> which succeeded, was stigmatised

<sup>1</sup> The charge against Lord Shelburne (afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne) was, not that he had received a bribe, but that he had availed himself of his political information to speculate profitably in the stocks. Horne Tooke, a bitter enemy of Lord Shelburne's, affirmed that these rumours of stockjobbing were utterly groundless. "The reason which he assigned gave great weight to his testimony. Lord Shelburne's agent in the City at that time had been for many years one of Mr. Tooke's intimate friends. Mr. Tooke declared that he had watched the movements and conversation of that gentleman from day to day, with perhaps an eye of scrutinising hostility; that he had constant confidential conversation with him about Lord Shelburne; and that from circumstances which he then learnt respecting the state of his Lordship's affairs he knew that the stories in circulation could not be true."—*Edinburgh Review*, xxv. 212.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> George Grenville, born 1712, died 1770. His Administration suc-



as only a machine, the puppets of which were agitated by concealed wires. It is obvious that no charge in the power of malevolence to invent and circulate could be more calculated to prejudice the King in the estimation of his people. But it became further augmented by another topic of abuse and declamation founded on the extraordinary degree of personal favour enjoyed by Lord Bute at Carlton House, and the predilection with which he was known to be regarded by the Princess Dowager of Wales. Satirical prints, generally dispersed throughout the kingdom, in which her Royal Highness was not at all spared, inflamed the public mind. Comparisons drawn from English history, particularly from the reign of Edward III., when the Queen Dowager Isabella and Mortimer, her favourite, were known or supposed to have lived in a criminal union; these allusions, which were disseminated in all the periodical works of the time, and particularly in the "*North Briton*," made a deep impression.

Even the filial deference and respect manifested by his Majesty after his accession, down to the last moment of her life, towards his mother, was converted into a subject not only of censure, but of accusation, as originating in unworthy and interested motives or in culpable subservience. It cannot, however, be denied that Lord Bute enjoyed a higher place in that Princess's favour, if not in her affection, than seemed compatible with strict propriety. His visits to Carlton House, which were always performed in the evening, and the precautions taken to conceal his arrival, though they might perhaps have been dictated more by an apprehension of insult from the populace, to whom he was obnoxious, than

ceeded that of Lord Bute in April 1763, and came to an end in July 1765.—ED.

from any improper reasons, yet awakened suspicion. He commonly made use on these occasions of the sedan-chair and the chairmen of Miss Vansittart, a lady who held a distinguished place in her Royal Highness's family. In order more effectually to elude notice, the curtains of the chair were close drawn. The repartee of Miss Chudleigh, afterwards better known as Duchess of Kingston, at that time a maid of honour at Carlton House, when reproached by her royal mistress for the irregularities of her conduct, obtained likewise much publicity. "*Votre altesse royale sait,*" replied she, "*que chacune à son But.*" As the King was accustomed to repair frequently of evenings to Carlton House, and there to pass a considerable time, the world supposed, though probably with great injustice, that the sovereign, his mother, and the ex-minister met in order to concert and to compare their ideas, thus forming a sort of interior Cabinet, which controlled and directed the ostensible Administration.

That after having so precipitately thrown up the ministerial reins in 1763, Lord Bute felt desirous of again resuming his political power, I know from good authority; and that he was aided in the attempt by the Princess with all her influence is equally matter of fact; but their joint efforts proved unavailing to effect the object. A nobleman who was accustomed at that time to form one of the party which met at Carlton House, and who usually remained there while his Majesty stayed, assured me that every measure had been concerted between her Royal Highness and Lord Bute for the purpose of bringing him again into Ministry. As the first necessary step towards its accomplishment, they agreed that he should endeavour to obtain permission to see the dispatches which were often sent to the King from the Secretary of State while he con-

tinued with his mother. On those occasions, when the green box containing letters or papers arrived, he always withdrew into another room in order to peruse them at his ease. Lord Bute, as had been prearranged, upon the messenger bringing a dispatch, immediately took up two candles, and proceeded before the King to the closet, expecting that his Majesty, when they were alone together, would communicate to him its nature, and that he should thus begin again to transact business. But the King, unquestionably aware of the intention, and probably disgusted at the want of firmness which his Minister had formerly shown, or from other unascertained causes, extinguished at once the hopes entertained from this project. When he came to the door of the room he stopped, took the candles out of Lord Bute's hand, and then dismissing him, shut the door, after which he proceeded to examine the dispatches alone. Lord Bute returned to the company, and the experiment was never repeated.

If the selection of that nobleman for the office of First Minister and the dismissal of Mr. Pitt deprived the King of the affection of many loyal subjects, the terms upon which the treaty of Fontainebleau was concluded, early in 1763, by Lord Bute, excited the strongest sensations of general disapprobation throughout the country. I am old enough to remember the expressions of that condemnation, which it is impossible not to admit were well founded. When we reflect that the navy of France had been nearly annihilated as early as 1759 by Sir Edward Hawke,<sup>1</sup> in the action which took place at Quiberon ; that Spain could make little or no opposition to us on the ocean, and that we were masters of Quebec, Montreal, together with all Canada, Cape Breton, Pondicherry, Goree,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Lord Hawke. He died in 1781.—ED.

Belleisle, the Havannah, and a large part of Cuba, besides the islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe, not to mention the capture of Manilla, which, on account of its remote position, was not then known; while, on the other hand, the enemy, though they probably would have effected the conquest or reduction of Portugal in the course of the ensuing campaign, yet had taken nothing from us which they had retained except Minorca;—when we consider these facts, what shall we say to a peace which restored to the two branches of the House of Bourbon every possession above enumerated except Canada—for as to Cape Breton, though it was ceded to us, yet, when dismantled, it became only a useless desert—accepting, as we did, in exchange for so many valuable colonies or settlements in every quarter of the globe, the cession of the two Floridas from the crown of Spain, together with the restitution of Minorca by France?

At the distance of more than half a century, when the passions and prejudices of the hour have ceased, we cannot consider such a treaty without astonishment and concern. Scarcely indeed does the peace of Utrecht justly awaken warmer feelings of indignation, for concluding which pacification its authors were impeached, imprisoned, or compelled to fly their country. If Lord Bute escaped the fate of the Earl of Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, he has not been more exempt than were those Ministers from the censures of his contemporaries and of posterity. Nor did Queen Anne perhaps sustain a greater loss of reputation and popularity by signing the treaty of Utrecht than George III. suffered by concluding that of Fontainbleau. Its impolicy appears not less glaring, nor less obvious than its defects of every other kind. The expulsion of the French from Canada and of the Spaniards from

Florida, by liberating the American Colonies from all apprehension of foreign enemies, laid the inevitable foundation of their rebellion, and effected their subsequent emancipation from Great Britain within the space of twenty years. This necessary result of such measures, perfectly foreseen at the time, was pointed out by Dr. Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, one of my earliest friends, a man of eminent talents,<sup>1</sup> as well as by others. The House of Bourbon, soon recovering from the wounds inflicted by Pitt, contested anew, with better success, for the empire of the sea. Neither the Havannah, Belleisle, nor Manilla have ever passed a second time under the English power. If we weigh these circumstances, we shall not wonder that motives unworthy of an upright Minister or of an able statesman were attributed to Lord Bute; nor shall we be surprised that the incapacity or errors of the Administration diminished in no small degree the respect justly inspired by the private virtues of the sovereign.

The injudicious persecution of Wilkes completed the unpopularity which Lord Bute's person and measures had begun to produce throughout the nation. Whatever might have been the misconduct of Wilkes, and however deficient he might have appeared in those moral qualities which entitle to public respect, or even to individual approbation, yet, from the instant that he became an object of royal or ministerial resentment on account of his attachment to the cause of constitutional freedom, he found protectors in the public. Neither his wit, his talents, nor his courage could have raised him to political eminence if he had not been singled out for severe, not to say unconstitutional, prosecution. The two Secretaries of State and the Lord Steward of the Household, had they been hired by his worst

<sup>1</sup> Josiah Tucker, D.D., born 1712, died 1799.—ED.

enemies to injure their royal master in the esteem of his people, and to throw, as it were, upon *him* the odium of *their* violence, or incapacity, or ignorance, could not have done it more effectually than by the line of action which they adopted. Lord Talbot is consigned to eternal ridicule (as Pope says that Cromwell is "damned to everlasting fame") in that incomparable letter written by Wilkes to the late Earl Temple on the 5th of October 1762, descriptive of the entertaining duel fought at Bagshot only two hours before, where the Lord Steward appears in the most contemptible point of view. The Earls of Egremont and Halifax, by issuing a general warrant for the seizure of Wilkes and taking his person into custody, while they compromised the majesty of the crown, trampled on the liberties of the subject and violated the essence of the English constitution. Men who commented with severity on these measures of impolitic resentment arraigned them as more characteristic of the vindictive administration of James II. than becoming the mild government of George III. Wilkes, nevertheless, wounded in a duel, repeatedly menaced with assassination, pursued by the House of Commons and outlawed by the court of King's Bench, withdrew into France, where he insensibly sunk into oblivion. His very name and his public merits, as well as his private sufferings, seemed to be equally forgotten by the nation during two or three years.

But the Duke of Grafton, who had become First Minister after the extinction of the short and feeble Administration of Lord Rockingham, appeared as if desirous to improve upon the errors and to renew the most unpopular acts of his predecessor, Lord Bute. Instead of wisely extending the pardon of the Crown to Mr. Wilkes, or treating him with magnanimous contempt when he returned from

Paris, the Duke, in defiance of their past intimacy and familiarity, put in force the penalties of his sentence of outlawry, thus rendering him a second time the object of general compassion and protection. Rejected as a candidate to represent the City of London, he was elected member for the county of Middlesex.<sup>1</sup> Tumultuous or disorderly assemblies of the people in St. George's Fields, whom it was esteemed necessary to repress by a military force, and in performing which service some individuals, who apparently had taken no part in the riots, were killed or wounded, exasperated the nation against the authors of such severities. The House of Commons, adopting the principles as well as the enmities of the Administration, expelled Wilkes from his seat, declared him ineligible to sit among them, and placed Colonel Luttrell in his room. While the pardon of the Crown was extended to ruffians convicted of the most sanguinary outrages and violence during the election at Brentford, by measures of consummate incapacity a popular individual was singled out for the whole vengeance of the Government and the Legislature. The tumults of London in March 1769, which menaced with insult or attack even the palace of the sovereign, bore no feeble resemblance to the riotous disorders that preceded the civil wars under Charles I. A hearse, followed by the mob, was driven into the courtyard at St. James's, decorated with insignia of the most humiliating or indecent description. I have always understood that the late Lord Mountmorris, then a very young man,

<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Aylesbury from 1757 to 1764, when he was expelled. Elected for Middlesex, 28th March 1768. Return amended by order of the House, dated 15th April 1769, by erasing the name of John Wilkes, Esq., and substituting the name of Henry Lawes Luttrell, Esq. He was several times re-elected, and in 1774 was allowed to sit without molestation. He was again elected to the Parliaments of 1780 and 1784, and died in 1797.—ED.

was the person who on that occasion personated the executioner, holding an axe in his hands and his face covered with a crape. The King's firmness did not, however, forsake him in the midst of these trying ebullitions of democratic rage. He remained calm and unmoved in the drawing-room, while the streets surrounding his residence echoed with the shouts of an enraged multitude, who seemed disposed to proceed to the greatest extremities. But the First Lord of the Treasury did not manifest equal constancy nor display the same resolution as his master. It seemed to be the fate of George III. to be served by Ministers as much his inferiors in personal and political courage as in every other moral or estimable quality.

Another opponent, still more formidable than Mr. Wilkes, had arisen amidst these convulsions of the capital and the country, who, from the place of his concealment, like Paris in the "*Iliad*," inflicted the severest wounds, and who seems to have eluded all discovery down to the present hour. It is obvious that I mean "*Junius*." This celebrated writer, whom the obtrusive and imprudent vanity of Sir William Draper, even more than his own matchless powers of composition, originally forced upon the notice of the public, first appeared in January 1769. His opening letter, addressed to the printer of the "*Public Advertiser*," then a popular newspaper, depicts in the blackest colours the situation of the country, dishonoured, as he asserts, in the eyes of foreign nations; disunited, oppressed, and ill administered at home. Like Satan when invoking his stupified and fallen associates, he seems to exclaim, while endeavouring to rouse the English nation from their political apathy—

"Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"

The conclusion of his opening address operated



with amazing effect, and can hardly be exceeded in energy. "If," says he, "by the immediate interposition of Providence, it were possible for us to escape a crisis so full of terror and despair, posterity will not believe the history of the present times. They will not believe it possible that their ancestors could have survived or recovered from so desperate a condition, while a Duke of Grafton was Prime Minister; a Lord North, Chancellor of the Exchequer; a Weymouth and a Hillsborough, Secretaries of State; a Granby, Commander-in-Chief; and Mansfield, chief criminal Judge of the kingdom." After transfixing with his keenest shafts the Commander-in-Chief of the forces, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and the Duke of Bedford, he fastened like a vulture on the First Minister. With an acrimony and ability that have perhaps never been equalled by any political writer, he endeavoured to point the public indignation equally against the person and the measures of the Duke of Grafton. Superior in beauty of diction and all the elegance of literary composition to Lord Bolingbroke, not inferior to Swift in closeness as well as correctness of style and in force of satire, the letters of "Junius" will be read as long as the English language endures. Nor did his pen, after exposing the want of spirit and energy in the Government, respect even the majesty of the throne. In his memorable "Letter to the King," dated the 19th of December 1769, which cannot be perused without a mixture of admiration and indignation, he too successfully labours to render even the virtues of the sovereign suspicious and odious, while he attempts to degrade the royal character in the opinion of his subjects. The avidity with which these publications were then sought after and perused is difficult to be conceived at the present time, and never was exceeded at any

period of our history. "Junius" may indeed justly be reckoned among the leading causes which drove the Duke of Grafton from the helm of affairs.

I have been assured by persons of honour and veracity who were in the habit of continually seeing Bradshaw,<sup>1</sup> then Secretary of the Treasury, and of knowing his private sentiments, that he made no secret to them of the agony into which the Duke of Grafton was thrown by these productions. Such was their effect and operation on his mind as sometimes utterly to incapacitate him during whole days for the ministerial duties of his office. There are, nevertheless, many who believe and assert that his sudden resignation was not so much produced by the attacks of "Junius" as it originated from another quarter. It has been pretended that the Princess Dowager of Wales, highly indignant at the mention made of her name in the examination and depositions of Dr. Musgrave at the bar of the House of Commons, remonstrated strongly with the King on the supineness of his First Minister in permitting, or rather in not suppressing, such parliamentary inquiries. However the fact may be, it is certain that, at a moment when such an event was least expected, in January 1770, he resigned his office, giving, as Lord Bute had done before, another instance of ministerial dereliction, but not the last of the kind which has occurred in the course of the present reign. Lord North, who succeeded to his place, inherited likewise a considerable portion of his unpopularity.

Having mentioned the subject and the productions of "Junius," it seems impossible to dismiss them without making some allusion to their author. I have always considered that secret as the best

<sup>1</sup> He committed suicide in November 1774. See Walpole's Letters, vi. 144.—ED.

kept of any in our time. It was, indeed, on many accounts, and for many reasons, a secret of the most perilous nature ; for the offences given and the wounds inflicted by his pen were too deep and too severe to admit of forgiveness, when we reflect that living sovereigns and Ministers formed the objects selected for his attack. I have been assured that the King, riding out in the year 1772 accompanied by his equerry, General Desaguliers, said to him in conversation, "We know who *Junius* is, and he will write no more." The General, who was too good a courtier to congratulate upon such a piece of intelligence, contented himself with bowing, and the discourse proceeded no farther. Mrs. Shuttleworth, who was General Desaguliers' daughter, believed in the accuracy of this fact, but I nevertheless report it with becoming doubt. If, however, the King had penetrated to the secret, I do not believe that the Duke of Grafton or the first Lord Mansfield had arrived at any certitude on the point, though their suspicions might be strongly directed towards some one individual. It is certain that Sir William Draper died in ignorance of his antagonist, and that he continued to express, down to a very short time before his decease, which took place at Bath, his concern at the prospect of going out of life uninformed on the subject. Lord North either did not know, or professed not to know, his name. The late Lord Temple protested the same ignorance. He must, nevertheless, have lain within a very narrow circle, for every evidence, internal and external, proves him to have been a person of pre-eminent parts, admirable information, high connections, living almost constantly in the metropolis and in good company, ignorant of nothing which was done at St. James's, in the two Houses of Parliament, in the War Office, or in the courts of law, and personally

acquainted with many anecdotes or facts only to be attained by men moving in the first ranks of society I do not speak of his classical attainments, because those might have been found among mere men of letters. "Junius" was a man of the world. Henry Sampson Woodfall, who printed the letters themselves, was ignorant of the name or quality of the writer, and remained so during his whole life. Who then, we repeat, was he?

Many individuals have become successively objects of suspicion or of accusation. Lord George Germain, father of the present Duke of Dorset, was named among others. I knew him very intimately, and have frequently conversed with him on the subject. He always declared his ignorance of the author, but he appeared to be gratified and flattered by the belief or imputation lighting on himself. As far, however, as my opinion can have any weight, though, in common with mankind at large, I estimated very highly Lord George's talents, I considered them as altogether unequal to such literary productions; and I possessed the best means as well as opportunities of forming my judgment from his conversation and correspondence, both which I enjoyed for several years. Indeed, I apprehend it is unnecessary to waste much time in attempting to disprove such a supposition, which has few advocates or supporters. Those persons who originally suggested, or who continue to maintain it, found the opinion principally on the attack of Lord Granby, contained in "Junius's" first letter. But, if we examine that composition, we shall see that the Marquis is by no means singled out for animadversion. He only attracts his portion of satire as a constituent member of the Cabinet, and it was Sir William Draper's officious vanity which rendered him unfortunately more conspicuous than the Duke of Grafton or Lord

Mansfield. "It is you, Sir William Draper," says "Junius," "who have taken care to represent your friend in the character of a drunken landlord, who deals out his promises as liberally as his liquor, and will suffer no man to leave his table either sorrowful or sober." And in a subsequent letter he observes, "I should justly be suspected of acting upon motives of more than common enmity to Lord Granby if I continued to give you fresh materials or occasion for writing in his defence." If, indeed, Lord George Germain was "Junius," his powers of composition had suffered a diminution between 1770 and 1780, and no longer continued as powerful at the latter period as they had been ten years earlier in life. But no man preserved at near seventy the freshness and strength of his faculties in every branch more perfect or undiminished than that nobleman. Nor, from the knowledge which I possessed of his loyalty and attachment to the person of his sovereign, do I believe that any motives or feelings could ever have induced him to address to his Majesty the "Letter of *Junius* to the King."

As little do I conceive Wilkes to have been the man. I knew him likewise well, though not with the same intimacy as I did the last-named nobleman. It must be owned that Wilkes possessed a classic pen, keen, rapid, cutting, and capable, as we have seen in the "*North Briton*," no less than in other political productions, of powerfully animating or inflaming the public mind. His injuries were great, his feelings acute, his spirit undaunted, and his compositions full of talent. But it was not "Junius." Wilkes's two memorable letters, the one addressed to Lord Temple in October 1762 from Bagshot, immediately after his duel with Lord Talbot, and the other written from his house in Great George Street on the 19th December 1763, to

Dr. Brocklesby, subsequent to his duel with Martin, may vie in wit, pleasantry, and powers of ridicule with any compositions in the English language. His letter, dated from "Paris, 22d October 1764," appealing to the electors of Aylesbury against the treatment which he met with from both Houses of Parliament and from Lord Mansfield, challenges equal admiration. Lastly, his address to the Duke of Grafton, written likewise from "Paris, on the 12th of December 1766," containing the animated relation of his arrest, followed by his interview with the Earls of Egremont and Halifax, which took place at the residence of the former nobleman in Piccadilly, now Cholmondeley House,<sup>1</sup> can hardly be exceeded in energy, severity, and powers of reasoning. They charm perhaps as much as the writings of "Junius," but the difference between the two productions cannot be mistaken by any man who allows his reason fair play. Wilkes himself, who, instead of shrinking from the avowal, on the contrary, would have gladly assumed the fame attending on it, at whatever personal risk, always disclaimed any title to such a distinction. "*Utinam scripsissem!*" Would to Heaven I could have written them!" was his reply when charged with being the author.<sup>2</sup>

Hugh Macauley Boyd, a gentleman who accom-

<sup>1</sup> No. 94 Piccadilly, originally named Egremont House, then Cholmondeley House, and lastly Cambridge House, well known as the residence of Lord Palmerston. It is now the Naval and Military Club.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "Far from giving the least hint that he (Wilkes) was the author of 'Junius's' letters, he always explicitly disclaimed it, and treated it as a ridiculous supposition. No one acquainted with his style can suspect for a moment that he was the author of them; the merit of his style was simplicity; he had both gaiety and strength, but to the rancorous sarcasm, the lofty contempt with which 'Junius's' letters abound, no one was a greater stranger than Mr. Wilkes. To this may be added the very slighting manner in which 'Junius' expresses himself of Mr. Wilkes."—*Charles Butler's Reminiscences*, 1822, p. 80.—ED.

panied or followed Lord Macartney to Madras in 1781, where he died a few years afterwards, has been named, and his pretensions have been strongly maintained in print as well as in private society. It has been attempted, both in his case and in that of Wilkes, to prove from facts of various kinds, and anecdotes either true or imaginary, their respective right to the works of "Junius." But I never could discover in the avowed writings of Boyd any similarity, and still less any equality, with the letters of the unknown and immortal person in question. Nor would it seem, as far as we are able to judge, that Boyd had, or could have, access to the information profusely exhibited through almost every page of "Junius," and which very few individuals were competent to attain. Boyd did not live in the circle where alone such materials were to be found or to be collected.

I have heard the Reverend Philip Rosenhagen pointed out as "Junius," but the opinion never, I believe, had many supporters, nor did I ever regard it as entitled to serious refutation. I knew him as an acquaintance between 1782 and 1785. He appeared to me to be a plausible, well-informed man, imposing in his manner, of a classic mind, and agreeable conversation, living much in the world, received on the most intimate footing at Shelburne House, and possessing very considerable talents. There is, however, a wide interval between such abilities, however eminent, and those displayed by the writer under examination.

A more probable, or at least a better concerted story, confidently circulated at the time, and which has been lately revived, was that Mr. William Greatrakes, a native of Ireland, who lived with the Earl of Shelburne, and acted as his private secretary, composed the letters. The materials were

said to have been furnished by Lord Shelburne, and worked up by his secretary. It was added that he died in August 1781, at Hungerford in Berkshire, not very far from that nobleman's seat of Bow Wood, and lies buried in Hungerford churchyard, with a plain stone over his remains, together with a short inscription, terminated by the three Latin words—

“Stat nominis umbra,”

the motto usually or always prefixed to “Junius’s” letters. I have never considered this narration, however plausible it appears, as worthy of credit or as meriting attention.

It has been recently attempted to prove that Glover, the distinguished author of “Leonidas,” was “Junius,” and the confirmation of the assertion has been sought in the “Memoirs of a celebrated literary and political character,” lately published. But though every line of those “Memoirs” bespeaks the writer to have possessed equal ability and integrity, living in a high circle, himself a member of the House of Commons during many years,—though the same ardent spirit of freedom which animates Glover as a poet is diffused over this production, and though various passages in it may seem to bear a degree of resemblance or analogy to the animated apostrophes of “Junius,” yet no person who has perused attentively the work in question can for an instant persuade himself of the identity of the two men. If, however, these grounds of belief, drawn from the internal evidence contained in the respective compositions, should fail in producing a decided opinion, I can adduce better proof. Mr. Glover, son of the author of “Leonidas,” and whom to name is sufficient to stamp the authenticity of all that he asserts, assured



me only a short time ago, in answer to my inquiries on the subject, that "he had not the least reason to suppose or to believe that his father composed the letters of "Junius," an admission far outweighing any real or fancied similarity between those writers. Still more recent attempts have been made in favour of a foreigner, De Lolme,<sup>1</sup> but, however speciously supported on some points, they rest on no solid foundation.

During many years of my life, notwithstanding the severity with which Wedderburn is treated by "Junius," I nourished a strong belief, approaching to conviction, that the late Earl of Rosslyn, then Mr. Wedderburn, was himself the author of those letters. His abilities were eminent, his opportunities of information great, and his political connections between January 1769 and January 1772, the two extreme periods of the appearance of the compositions in question, favour the conjecture. Though Churchill calls Wedderburn

"A pert, prim prater of the Northern race,"

his talents of every kind entitled him to high admiration, and he particularly possessed the jurisprudential, as well as parliamentary knowledge, lavishly exhibited in various parts of "Junius."<sup>2</sup> I have heard men assert, who were entitled to respect and credit, that they had seen several of the originals in the possession of Woodfall, and that they recognised the handwriting to be that of Mrs. Wedderburn, his first wife, with which manual character they were perfectly acquainted. If this fact, indeed, were to be admitted, it might seem decisive, but such assertions, however apparently

<sup>1</sup> John Louis De Lolme, born 1745, died 1807, author of the famous book on the constitution of England.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Junius writes, however, "There is a something about him (Wedderburn) that even treachery cannot trust." (See *post*, vol. ii. p. 6.) —ED.

well sustained, are frequently made on erroneous or mistaken foundations. Perhaps I ought to add that the persons in question were natives of Scotland, and national vanity or partiality might mislead their judgment on such a point.

All circumstances fully weighed, my own conviction is, that the letters of "Junius" were written by the Right Honourable William Gerald Hamilton, commonly designated by the nickname of "Single-Speech Hamilton,"<sup>1</sup> from the report, generally though falsely circulated, that he never opened his mouth more than once in the English Parliament. He was during many years Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, and likewise a member of the British House of Commons while I sat in it; but I had not the honour of his acquaintance; and my opinion is founded on the general prevailing sentiment of those persons who, from their situation, rank, and means of information, are entitled to almost implicit belief. Throughout the various companies in which, from 1775 down to the present time, I have heard this mysterious question agitated, the great majority concurred in giving to Hamilton the merit of composing the letters under examination. Various noblemen or gentlemen who lived on terms of intimate friendship, and of almost daily intercourse with him, during the period of their appearance or publication, in particular, Horace Walpole, Earl of Oxford, and the late Earl of Clermont, have protested in my hearing that they traced or recollected in Junius's letters the *ipsissima*

<sup>1</sup> So it is *mine*. I well remember when they were most talked of, and N. Seward said, "How the arrows of 'Junius' were sure to wound and likely to stick." "Yes, sir," replied Dr. Johnson; "yet let us distinguish between the venom of the shaft and the vigour of the bow." At which expression Mr. Hamilton's countenance fell in a manner that to *me* betrayed the author. Johnson repeated the expression in his next pamphlet, and Junius *wrote no more*.—P.

*verba*, the precise words and expressions of Hamilton, which had recently fallen from his lips in conversation. His pen is universally admitted to have been most elegant, classical, correct, and nervous. This opinion, nevertheless, by no means amounts to demonstration or approaches to certainty; and it is possible that as the secret has not been divulged from authority during the lapse of so many years, posterity may never attain to any absolute proof upon the subject, and must rest satisfied with conjecture.

If "Junius" could be supposed still alive, obvious motives for concealing himself, drawn from the strongest principles of human action, will suggest themselves to every man's mind. On the other hand, if he be no more, what reasons sufficiently powerful can be produced to account for the voluntary renunciation of that posthumous fame which after his decease might have been reclaimed without apprehension of any injurious consequences to himself? This argument or consideration long induced me to suppose that "Junius" must be living, and that his death, whenever it took place, would infallibly remove the veil which conceals his name. On more mature reflection, nevertheless, very strong causes for continuing to preserve his incognito beyond the grave may present themselves. If he left behind him lineal representatives, he might dread exposing them to the hereditary animosity of some of those whom he designates as "the worst and the most powerful men in this country." Even should he have left no descendants, it is possible that he might dislike the comparison between his actions and his writings which must have been involuntarily made by mankind. If, for instance, it would have been proved that he accepted an office, a pension, or a peerage, from the sovereign and

the Minister whom he had recently accused as enemies to their country or as having betrayed its interests, would not the moral aversion or contempt excited towards his memory by such a disclosure have overbalanced the meed of literary fame obtained from the labours of his pen? Should we admit the validity of this reasoning, we shall be led to infer that "Junius" may remain as unknown to posterity a century hence as he continues to be now in 1815.

There is still another circumstance applicable to the present time, which did not exist when Burnet, or Bulstrode, or Reresby wrote their "Memoirs," and which fact must be supposed to have had its due operation on "Junius." Between 1660 and 1714, a period of little more than fifty years, three families in succession reigned over this country, whereas from 1760 down to 1814 only one prince has occupied the throne, who still lives, though we lament that he no longer reigns. Under William III., who had expelled his father-in-law, and who could not feel any esteem for Charles II., "Junius," had he then flourished and had levelled his shafts against those kings, might have unmasked and boldly avowed his writings. When the two Houses of Nassau or of Stuart no longer swayed the sceptre, and when George I. was called to the crown, the severest attacks made on the preceding sovereigns or Ministers could have excited only a feeble degree of resentment, if they did not even give rise to opposite emotions. But the case is widely different with respect to "Junius," and might justly challenge from him another line of conduct. Not only the same family, but the same individual remains, at least nominally, king. And that individual, whatever errors of judgment he may have committed, or however unpopular he was almost

from the period of his accession down to 1783, has been since that time embalmed in the affections of his people. I must leave the degree of solidity contained in these observations to the decision of every man's judgment, as elucidatory or explanatory of the question respecting "Junius."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to so many domestic causes which weakened the veneration felt towards the King, two foreign events had likewise occurred productive of national dissatisfaction. The first arose from the line of policy, or rather of conduct, adopted by Great Britain relative to Corsica. That island, which in later times has attained a degree of odious celebrity by giving birth to a man whose vast military talents and insatiable ambition, aided by the progress of the French Revolution, enabled him to overturn and to trample under his feet, during many years, the ancient system of Europe, was, after a long series of insurrections against the Genoese Government, ultimately transferred by Genoa to France. Choiseul,<sup>2</sup> a Minister of an elevated mind and of ambitious designs, anxious to raise the French name as well as the reputation of Louis XV. from the state of humiliation into which both were fallen by the ill success of the preceding war, undertook, and at length effected, the reduction of Corsica. It may, however, be justly questioned whether the conquest has really augmented the strength or resources of France. But the generosity characteristic of the English nation, the sympathy felt towards a race of brave, oppressed, and unfortunate islanders contending for freedom, when added to the jealous

<sup>1</sup> Since I wrote the preceding observations, a perusal of the work lately published, denominated "The Identity of Junius with a Distinguished Living Character Established," leaves little or no doubt on my mind that those celebrated productions are to be attributed to Sir Philip Francis.—WRAXALL.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Francis, Duc de Choiseul, died in 1785.—ED.

susceptibility natural to a state always apprehensive of the aggrandisement of its rival—these feelings or political opinions produced a powerful effect on the public mind. They were sustained by publications calculated to rouse the country from its apathy or indifference to the fate of Corsica. Pascal Paoli, chief of the insurgents,<sup>1</sup> was depicted in them as another Gustavas Vasa or William Tell struggling against tyranny and oppression, while the English Ministry, it was said, pusillanimously looked on, regardless of the event, and inattentive to so important an accession of power acquired by our natural enemy.

Scarcely had the impression made by the French conquest of Corsica ceased to operate and sunk into a degree of oblivion, when another occurrence awakened and exasperated the nation against the Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon. The immediate cause of this dispute arose from the possession taken of the Falkland Islands by England; but the Court of Madrid had always evaded or refused payment of the sum due for the ransom of Manilla. Never, perhaps, was any object, in itself abstractedly considered, less valuable nor less worthy of public attention than the Falkland Islands, yet the manner in which Spain acted on the occasion displayed so much arrogance as to compromise the honour of the British crown, and to demand a reparation no less public than the affront. The islands in question, situated in a most inclement latitude in the other hemisphere, not far removed from Cape Horn, abandoned by nature to seals and to wild-fowl, scarcely covered with a scanty vegetation,

<sup>1</sup> Paoli was born in 1726, and chosen by the Corsicans to be their general in 1753. He was defeated in 1769 by the Comte de Vaux, and fled to England, where he lived for many years. He died in London, 5th February 1807.—ED.

could hardly merit from their intrinsic consequence, commercial or political, that any blood should be spilt in order to acquire or to retain their possession. But the jealous policy with which the old Spanish Government always beheld even the slightest approach of any foreign power towards that vast continent of South America, over which, though they could neither colonise nor subject it, they nevertheless claimed a dominion, impelled the Court of Madrid to commence its operations in a manner no less hostile than insulting to us. An English frigate was detained in the harbour of Port Egmont by force. It must be owned that the vigour or rather audacity of such a proceeding could scarcely have been exceeded by Cardinal Alberoni himself, when he presided in the Spanish councils under Philip V. The act was indeed only committed ostensibly by an individual, Buccarelli, who commanded the forces of Charles III. in that quarter of the globe, but the Government avowed, justified, and supported him.

Lord North, on whom had recently devolved the first place in administration, while he appeared deeply to feel the indignity offered to his sovereign, manifested likewise a disposition to resent it in the most effectual manner. Neither the state of the English navy nor the preparations made in our ports for the immediate equipment of a powerful fleet were said, however, to be such as the exigency obviously demanded and the public honour unquestionably required. A mitigated compromise, by which Spain, though she consented to cede the *possession* of the Falkland Islands to Great Britain, yet refused to admit or recognise our *right* to them, was, after long discussions, accepted by Ministers. It prevented a war, but it gave no general satisfaction, more especially as any mention of the Manilla ransom was studiously omitted in the convention. Assuredly

the moment seemed favourable to have imposed almost any conditions on the Spanish crown. Louis XV., sinking in years, and still more sunk in the general estimation of his subjects, disgusted at the ill success of the former war, and determined not to engage again in hostilities against England, having dismissed the Duke de Choiseul from office, and lost to every sense of public duty or national glory, would, it was well known, have disregarded "the family compact," and would have abandoned the other branch of the House of Bourbon in the contest.

But Lord North, who preferred pacific measures, had recourse, besides the ordinary modes of negotiation, to expedients not usually adopted in order to avert a rupture. The late Sir William Gordon, whom I well knew, and who at that time filled the post of British Envoy at the Court of Brussels, was selected by Ministers to undertake the commission of preventing war. For this purpose he received private instructions to repair in the most secret but expeditious manner to Paris, and there to use every possible exertion for prevailing on Louis XV. and the new First Minister, the Duke d'Aguillon, to compel the Spanish Court to accommodate the points in dispute. Gordon, who found in the French sovereign and his Cabinet the warmest disposition to preserve peace, succeeded completely in the object of his mission. He told me that as a recompense for his service he received from Lord North a pension of three hundred pounds a year, and from his Majesty the further sum of one thousand pounds as a present; but the convention by which peace was made excited universal disapprobation, and afforded to the pen of "Junius" an occasion which he did not lose of pointing the public censure with inconceivable severity against the King himself personally, no less than against the Administration.



Even after the interval of four years which elapsed between the termination of this dispute and the commencement of the American rebellion, though the nation enjoyed profound peace, together with all the advantages of a flourishing commerce, augmenting opulence, and progressive prosperity, yet the sovereign was by no means popular. New sources of discontent, and imaginary or doubtful subjects of complaint were ingeniously discovered. Lord Bute had, indeed, disappeared from the theatre of public life, and the Princess Dowager of Wales, whose supposed influence over her son rendered her always an object of attack, was no more. She expired in 1772 of a most painful disease, which she supported with uncommon firmness. But other names and figures succeeded to their pretended influence behind the curtain of state. Bradshaw,<sup>1</sup> surnamed "the cream-coloured parasite," and Dyson<sup>2</sup> gave place to the superior ascendancy of Jenkinson,<sup>3</sup> who was accused of directing unseen the resolutions of the Cabinet, and of possessing the interior secret, as well as confidence, of the crown. A prince, distinguished by almost every domestic virtue, animated by the noblest intentions and by the warmest affection for his people, was represented as despotic, inflexible, vindictive, and disposed to govern by unconstitutional means or engines. His very pleasures, his tastes, and his private recreations were traduced or satirised as bearing the same stamp and impression. Poetry lent her aid to expose these personal weaknesses, if such they were, to public animadversion or ridicule. The "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers" (commonly attributed to one of the

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to the Treasury.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah Dyson, Secretary to the Treasury and patron of Aken-side.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Charles Jenkinson, created Baron Hawkesbury in 1786, and Earl of Liverpool in 1796, died in 1808.—ED.

finest poetic writers of the period, Mason), rivalled "Junius" in delicacy of invective, in its insulting irony, and in the severity of its imputations. Such appeared to be the state of public opinion, and such the prejudices generally entertained against the King throughout the nation at the period when, in the summer of 1775, hostilities began on the American continent.

That George III. from a very early period of his reign had imbibed a deeply rooted opinion of the parliamentary right inherent in the mother country to tax her American colonies, and of the practicability, or rather the facility, of the attempt if made, no well-informed man can entertain a doubt. I have been assured by a nobleman now alive, that as early as 1764 his Majesty, conversing with Mr. George Grenville, then First Minister, on the subject of the finances, which, after the close of the triumphant "seven years' war," demanded economy no less than ability to re-establish, mentioned to him as one great pecuniary resource the measure of taxing America.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Grenville replied that he had frequently revolved and thoroughly considered the proposition, which he believed to be not only difficult but impracticable, and pregnant, if undertaken, with the most alarming consequences to the sovereign himself. These apprehensions, far, however, from intimidating or discouraging the King, made no impression on his mind; and in a subsequent conversation with the same Minister, his Majesty gave him plainly to understand that if he wanted either nerves or inclination to make the attempt, others could be found who were ready to undertake it.

<sup>1</sup> "Sir Nathaniel attributes the plan of taxing America to the King, and describes his Majesty as forcing it upon Mr. Grenville, though it is well known that this measure was Mr. Grenville's own, and certainly not *forced* on him by the King."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 209.—ED.

The words produced their full effect upon the person to whom they were addressed, and Mr. Grenville preferred endeavouring to realise the experiment, however hazardous he might esteem it, rather than allow it to be committed to other hands. It failed at that time, but was revived ten years later, with more serious national results, under Lord North's Administration.

I have always considered the principle upon which that war commenced, and peculiarly as affecting the King, to have been not only defensible, but meritorious. It was not a war of prerogative, but a contest undertaken for maintaining the right of Parliament to impose taxes on British America. If George III. would have separated the interests of his crown from those of the Legislature, he might have made advantageous terms with his Transatlantic subjects; but he disdained any compromise by which he must have dissevered himself from his Parliament. Nor have I ever esteemed the political and military conductors of the American revolution as other than successful rebels of unquestionable courage, constancy, and ability, whatever eulogiums were conferred on them in the House of Commons by Fox and Burke. I well know that the names of Franklin and of Washington have been consecrated by a very numerous part of the inhabitants of Great Britain. The former, if considered as a natural philosopher, a philanthropist, and a man of genius, doubtless may lay claim to universal esteem. Nor are the abstract pretensions of Washington less conspicuous when contemplated as a general and a citizen of America. In both capacities he may rank with Cincinnatus or with the younger Cato. But, in the estimation of all who regard the parliamentary supremacy of the mother country over colonies, which had been not merely planted, but likewise

preserved, by the expenditure of British blood and treasure, as constituting an immutable principle, a sovereign who would not have maintained that supremacy must have been unworthy of the sceptre.

The whole life of William III., from his attainment of manhood down to the last moments of his existence, was passed in a continual struggle to preserve the liberties of his own country or those of England against arbitrary power. His name will ever be connected with constitutional freedom, and as such is cherished in our remembrance. But does any person suppose that if William had reigned over the British Isles at the period of the American rebellion, whatever love of civil liberty might animate him as a man, he would on that account have relinquished the rights of his Parliament and his crown? Or that he would have tamely acquiesced in the refusal of his American subjects to contribute by indirect taxation to the general wants of the empire? Those who venture to form such a conclusion must, as it seems to me, have very imperfectly studied the character or appreciated the actions of that illustrious prince.

The wisdom and policy of the American war may perhaps appear more doubtful. The attempt in the first instance to tax, and afterwards to reduce by force, a vast continent, separated from Great Britain by an immense ocean, inhabited by a people who were individually indebted many millions to the mother country, ardent for emancipation, and sufficiently unanimous in their resistance to the parent State to be able to call out into action nearly all the persons capable of bearing arms, such an experiment, even if speculatively considered, would doubtless have impressed any wise statesman as hazardous in itself and of very uncertain issue. In the case before us, all these

impediments acquired additional strength from other concurring circumstances. A large proportion of society here at home regarded the American rebellion with favourable eyes, and secretly wished success to the cause, because they dreaded lest the British constitution itself would not long survive the increase of power and influence that the crown must necessarily derive from the subjugation of the colonies beyond the Atlantic. In both Houses of Parliament a numerous, active, and increasing party openly maintained and justified the insurrection, rejoiced in their triumphs, and reprobated in theory no less than in practice the attempt to subjugate the revolted States. Even those who did not approve such political principles yet saw in the war, if it should prove unsuccessful, a means of overturning the Administration.

The inability of Great Britain to levy and to send from her own population a military force sufficiently numerous for reducing to obedience so many provinces, extending from the frontiers of Canada to the borders of Florida, compelled the Government to obtain additional troops by application to various of the German Powers. From the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, in particular, who had married a daughter of George II.,<sup>1</sup> many thousands were procured. These stipendiaries, though perhaps not more justly objects of moral or political condemnation than were the Swiss and Grison regiments permanently retained in the service of France, or the Scotch corps then serving in the pay of Holland, yet increased the popular cry and furnished to the Opposition subjects of obloquy or of declamation. That France must, sooner or later, interfere in favour of the Americans became likewise obvious, because the French Ministry, lis-

<sup>1</sup> Mary, the King's fourth daughter.—ED.

tening only to the narrow suggestions of national rivalry, did not or would not perceive that it could never be the wise policy of a despotic Government to aid the cause of revolt by sending forces into a country where they must imbibe principles of freedom and resistance among rebels. It is an unquestionable fact that the late unfortunate Louis XVI. possessed enlargement of mind and sound discernment sufficient to feel this truth. He even pointed out the danger of detaching French troops to the assistance of Washington; and he was only overruled in his opposition to the measure by his deference for the counsels of Maurepas and Vergennes.<sup>1</sup> France has since dearly paid, under Robespierre and Bonaparte, for her deviation from the dictates of wisdom, as well as of magnanimity. in thus supporting insurrection.

It is, however, in the conduct of that unfortunate contest that we must principally seek for the cause of its ill success. Near three years elapsed from the time of its commencement before the Court of Versailles ventured openly to interpose as an enemy. But the Howes appear to have been either lukewarm, or remiss, or negligent, or incapable.<sup>2</sup> Lord North's selection of those two commanders for the purpose of subjecting America excited at the time just condemnation, however brave, able, or meritorious they might individually be esteemed as professional men. Their ardour in the cause itself was doubted, and still more questionable was their attachment to the Administration. Never, perhaps, in the history of modern war has

<sup>1</sup> The old key of the Bastille, a present from Lafayette, hangs in Washington's room. The trophy reminds the spectator that the Americans not only abolished royalty from their own soil, but sent a spirit which uprooted it in France.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Admiral Richard, Viscount (afterwards Earl) Howe, and General Sir William (afterwards Viscount) Howe.—ED. "They got money by prolonging the war, and would not therefore shorten it."—P.

an army or a fleet been more profusely supplied with every article requisite for brilliant and efficient service than were the troops and ships sent out by Lord North's Cabinet in 1776 across the Atlantic. But the efforts abroad did not correspond with the exertions made at home. The energy and activity of a Wellington never animated that torpid mass. Neither vigilance, enterprise, nor co-operation characterised the campaigns of 1776 and 1777. Dissipation, play, and relaxation of discipline, found their way into the British camp. New York became another Capua, though the genius and resources of Hannibal were not displayed by Sir William Howe. The defeat at Trenton, which was critically unfortunate, rescued the Congress from the lowest state of depression. After Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, little rational probability of success remained; and when Clinton succeeded to the command of the army at New York by the recall of Sir William Howe, the French were on the point of declaring in favour of the Americans. The loyalty and courage of Sir Henry Clinton were, besides, more distinguished than were his military talents. Even the British troops, engaged in a species of civil war, did not manifest the same eagerness or alacrity as when opposed to a foreign enemy, though they displayed in every engagement their accustomed steadiness and valour. The service itself, from the nature of the country, became severe, painful, and discouraging. Lakes, swamps, morasses, and almost impenetrable forests, presented obstacles at every step not easily overcome by the bravest soldiers. And though the scene of hostilities was successively shifted from Boston to New York, thence to the banks of the Chesapeake and the Delaware, finally, to the Southern and Central Provinces of Carolina and Virginia; yet

the results, however promising they might be at the commencement, proved always ultimately abortive. We have recently witnessed similar consequences flowing from nearly the same causes during the progress of our second contest with America.<sup>1</sup>

At home a gradual and increasing discontent overspread the kingdom, pervaded all classes, and seemed to menace the Administration with the effects of popular or national resentment. The navy, divided into parties, no longer blocked the enemy's ports or carried victory wherever it appeared, as it had done in the commencement of his Majesty's reign. Our distant possessions, unprotected by superior fleets, fell into the hands of France or Spain. Even our commerce was intercepted, captured, and greatly diminished. Each year seemed to produce new foreign adversaries and to augment the public embarrassments or distress. Ministers who were neither vigorous, nor fortunate, nor popular, holding even their offices by a precarious tenure, inspired no confidence in their measures. The Opposition, though diminished by the exertions which Govern-

<sup>1</sup> When we had the French war on our hands, the Americans took advantage of our occupation, and began to talk of annexing Canada, &c. We sent General Ross and Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane with an inefficient force in 1814 to assail our new enemy on his own ground. The contest was not very creditable to either party. After the capture of Washington (when the captors bore too strongly in mind the example set by the Americans in burning the House of Assembly at York (Toronto), when they got possession of that city, and the fall of Ross at Baltimore, Sir Edward Pakenham went out as commander-in-chief. So many mistakes were made in his expedition against New Orleans, that, had Jackson been a good general as well as a brave man, not one of the assailants would have returned alive. Colonel Mullins, on the English side, was brought before a court-martial for his conduct; and some years subsequently an officer at a dinner-party, in describing the New Orleans disaster to Lady Ventry, did not spare the roughest terms on Colonel Mullins's conduct. He was not aware that the Colonel became second Lord Ventry in 1824, and that he was commenting thus roughly on his Lordship's soldierly qualities to his widow. Mullins, Lord Ventry, died in 1827.—D.



ment had made to secure a majority in the Lower House on the convocation of a new Parliament, was numerous, confident, able, and indefatigable. They saw, or believed they saw, the object of their grasp at no great distance. Futurity presented to all men a most discouraging prospect, and peace appeared to be not only distant, but unattainable except by such sacrifices of national revenue, territory, and honour as could not be contemplated without a degree of dismay. America might be considered as lost to Great Britain, while our possessions in the East Indies seemed to be menaced with total subversion. Those who remember the period to which I allude will not think the colours of this description either heightened or overcharged. At no moment of the revolutionary war which we almost unintermittingly sustained against the French from 1793 to 1714, neither in 1797, during the mutiny in the navy nor in 1799, after the unsuccessful expedition to the Helder, nor in 1805, subsequent to the battle of Austerlitz, nor in 1806, when the Prussian monarchy fell at Auerstadt,<sup>1</sup> nor in 1807, at the peace of Tilsit, nor when Sir John Moore was compelled early in 1809 to re-embark at Corunna, and the whole Pyrenean peninsula seemed to lie prostrate at the feet of its Corsican master—though each of these eras unquestionably presents images of great national depression—did a deeper despondency prevail among all ranks of society than existed towards the close of the American contest, as the Administration of Lord North drew to its termination.

In the midst of so universal a dejection the King

<sup>1</sup> The battles of Auerstadt and Jena were fought on the same day—14th of October 1806. The Prussians were commanded by the King of Prussia and the French by Davoust at Auerstadt. At Jena, Napoleon commanded the French and Prince Hohenlohe the Prussians.—ED.

remained altogether unmoved. Neither defeats, nor difficulties, nor the number of his foreign enemies, nor domestic opposition unhinged his mind or shook his resolution. Convinced that he could not abandon the struggle in which he was engaged, however arduous or doubtful might be the result, without renouncing his own birthright, the interests of his crown, the supremacy of Parliament, and the best portion of the British Empire, he never vacillated nor showed for a single moment any disposition to dismiss his Ministers. Whatever irresolution, difference of opinion, or apprehension might pervade the Cabinet itself at certain moments, none of these sentiments agitated the sovereign. He only desired to abide the issue and to maintain the contest. It is perhaps for posterity to decide on the degree of approbation or of blame, political and moral, which such a character and conduct, under such circumstances, may justly challenge ; but, even if we should incline to censure or to condemn, we cannot help in some measure respecting and admiring it. As, however, his Majesty's opinions and wishes were universally known or understood throughout the country, a proportionate degree of unpopularity fell personally on him, and he was regarded as the vital principle which animated, sustained, and propelled the Administration. When we consider this fact, in addition to all the preceding statements given of his measures since he acceded to the throne, we shall no longer wonder that, in defiance of so many claims to the affectionate veneration of his people, he was nevertheless, at this period of his reign, by no means an object of general partiality or attachment.

Lord North, who had already occupied the posts of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer during eleven years, was then in the full vigour of his faculties, having nearly accomplished

the forty-ninth year of his age. His head and face exceedingly reminded the beholder of the portraits of Pope Leo X. In his person he was of the middle size, heavy, large, and much inclined to corpulency. There appeared in the cast and formation of his countenance, nay, even in his manner, so strong a resemblance to the royal family of England, that it was difficult not to perceive it. Like them, he had a fair complexion, regular features, light hair, with bushy eyebrows, and grey eyes rather prominent in his head. His face might be indeed esteemed a caricature of the King; and those who remembered the intimacy which subsisted between Frederick, the late Prince of Wales, and the Earl as well as Countess of Guildford, Lord North's father and mother, a circumstance to which allusion has already been made, found no difficulty in accounting, though perhaps very unjustly, for the similarity. He possessed an advantage, considered in his ministerial capacity, which neither of his two immediate predecessors, the Marquis of Rockingham or the Duke of Grafton, could boast, and in which his three immediate successors in office, Lord Rockingham, Lord Shelburne, and the Duke of Portland, were equally deficient. I mean that, being not a member of the House of Peers, but a commoner, he had attained in the course of years that intimate knowledge of the Lower House, its formation, composition, and the modes of conducting or influencing it as a body, which nothing can confer except long habits of debate and the necessity of daily personal attendance. His natural affability rendered him, besides, so accessible, and the communicativeness of his temper inclined him so much to conversation, that every member of the House found a facility in becoming known to him. Never, indeed, was a First Minister less intrenched within the forms of his official situa-

tion. He seemed, on the contrary, always happy to throw aside his public character and to relapse into an individual.

His tongue being rather too large for his mouth, rendered his articulation somewhat thick, though not at all indistinct. It is to this peculiarity or defect in his enunciation that "Junius" alludes in one of his letters, written in January 1770, when he says, after mentioning the Duke of Grafton's resignation, "The palm of ministerial firmness is now transferred to Lord North. He tells us so himself with the plenitude of the *ore rotundo*." He did not, however, bedew his hearers while addressing his discourse to them, as Burnet tells us the Duke of Lauderdale, so well known under Charles II.'s reign, always did, in consequence of the faulty conformation of his tongue. In Parliament the deficiency of Lord North's sight was productive to him of many inconveniences; for, even at the distance of a few feet, he saw very imperfectly, and across the House he was unable to distinguish persons with any degree of certainty or accuracy. In speaking, walking, and every motion, it is not enough to say that he wanted grace; he was to the last degree awkward. It can hardly obtain belief that in a full House of Commons he took off on the point of his sword the wig of Mr. Welbore Ellis,<sup>1</sup> and carried it a considerable way across the floor without ever suspecting or perceiving it. The fact happened in this manner. Mr. Ellis, who was then Treasurer of the Navy, and well advanced towards his seventieth year, always sat at the lowest corner of the Treasury bench, a few feet removed from Lord

<sup>1</sup> Welbore Ellis held at different times the following offices:—Lord of the Admiralty, Secretary at War, Treasurer of the Navy, Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and Secretary of State. He was created Lord Mendip in 1794, with remainder to his nephew, Viscount Cliefden. He died 2d February 1802, at the age of eighty-eight.—ED.

North. The latter having occasion to go down the House, previously laid his hand on his sword, holding the chafe of the scabbard forward nearly in a horizontal direction. Mr. Ellis stooping at the same instant that the First Minister rose, the point of the scabbard came exactly in contact with the Treasurer of the Navy's wig, which it completely took off and bore away. The accident, however ludicrous, was wholly unseen by Lord North, who received the first intimation of it from the involuntary bursts of laughter that it occasioned in every quarter of the House. Mr. Ellis, however, without altering a muscle of his countenance, and preserving the most perfect gravity in the midst of the general convulsions, having received back his wig, readjusted it to his head, and waited patiently till the House had recovered from the effect of so extraordinary as well as ridiculous an occurrence.

In addition to his defect of sight, Lord North was subject likewise to a constitutional somnolency, which neither the animated declamations of Fox, nor the pathetic invocations of Burke,<sup>1</sup> nor the hoarse menaces of Barré, could always prevent. It attacked him even on the Treasury bench, sometimes with irresistible force. Nor was he altogether exempt from its influence when in private society. Having called on a lady of condition one evening, the charms of whose person and conversation were universally acknowledged, he found her engaged in a violent altercation with her sister-in-law. Lord North, with his characteristic good-

<sup>1</sup> His odd revenge on Burke should have been mentioned. The orator was inveighing against him while he slept, or seemed to sleep, till, our language being insufficient for his abuse of such a Minister, Burke, quoting Latin against him, pronounced the word *vēctīgal*, as here accented. "Vēctīgal!" said Lord North, and slept again.—P. As to the quantities, Lord North was probably correct in the antepenultimate as well as the penultimate, although Mrs. Piozzi has incorrectly marked the former.—D.

humour, attempted to interpose his mediation and to accommodate the quarrel; but he found this negotiation more difficult than that of the Falkland Islands, and they were not to be pacified without recurring to legal assistance. He consented, therefore, to wait till the lady of the house should return from her solicitor's chambers in Lincoln's Inn, which she promised to do without delay. Seating himself in an arm-chair before the fire, he soon fell into a profound sleep, from which he was not awakened by the entrance of one of the maid-servants, who, seeing a corpulent man with a blue ribband across his breast asleep in her mistress's drawing-room, and being unacquainted with the first Minister's person, ran down into the kitchen to give the alarm. Yet, in defiance of all these physical infirmities, whenever he rose to reply in the House of Commons, he displayed no want of recollection, presence of mind, or accuracy. He seldom or never took notes, trusting to his memory for retaining the principal facts which occurred during the preceding discussion. Sir Grey Cooper, however, who commonly sat on his left hand, supplied on particular occasions that deficiency.<sup>1</sup>

Lord North was powerful, able, and fluent in debate, sometimes repelling the charges made against him with solid argument, but still more frequently eluding or blunting the weapons of his antagonists by the force of wit and humour. Fox, conscious of the First Minister's superiority in exciting a laugh, and irritated at being often the object of his talent for ridicule, more than once endeavoured to silence him by severity of animadversion. I remember, soon after I came into

<sup>1</sup> Mason, in a letter to Horace Walpole (Feb. 23, 1778), writes :— " I am really almost as fully and as usefully employed as if I was Sir Grey Cooper."—*Walpole's Letters*, vii. 34, note.—ED.

Parliament, towards the close of 1780, during the debate which arose upon Sir Hugh Palliser's nomination to the government of Greenwich Hospital, Lord North having exhibited his talents in that line of defence, Fox exclaimed, "There may be ingenuity, and there doubtless is wit in the noble Lord's reply, but there is no judgment. A joke constitutes a poor consolation for so many gallant admirals as have been forced out of the service. The Prime Minister is satisfied if he can only raise a laugh. He hopes that if the opposers of his measures cannot approve his reasoning, they may still be compelled to say, '*O quam belle concionaris!*'" Mr. Thomas Townshend,<sup>1</sup> alluding, about the same time, in the House of Commons to Lord North's unequalled powers of that nature, expressed his astonishment at the facility with which, while the empire was convulsed in every quarter, the First Lord of the Treasury could summon to his aid all the weapons of wit and levity. "Happen what will," said he, "the noble Lord is ready with his joke. Amidst the calamities of the war and the ruin of the country, while the state of public affairs renders every other person serious, he is prepared to treat events the most distressing as subjects of merriment, of gaiety, and of repartee. Such is his luxuriant fancy and sportive elasticity of character." These observations, however acrimonious, were not destitute of truth; but it was impossible to resist the effect of Lord North's talents for ridicule. They never forsook him, not even on the night of the 7th June 1780, when London was blazing round him, nor on the 18th of March 1782, only forty-

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. Thomas Townshend, eldest son of the Hon. Thomas Townshend and nephew of George Selwyn, a Lord of the Treasury in 1765, Secretary of State in 1782, created Baron Sydney in 1783, and Viscount Sydney in 1789. He died 13th June 1800.—ED.

eight hours before he resigned, when he jested in the House of Commons on the tax which he meant to impose upon hairdressers. Such was the formation of his mind. Sir Thomas More, Chancellor under Henry VIII., one of the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous Ministers that England ever saw, displayed the same facetiousness throughout every stage of his life, and exhibited it even on the scaffold during his last moments.

Lord North rarely rose to sublimity, though he possessed vast facility and command of language. If necessary, he could speak for a long time, apparently with great pathos, and yet disclose no important fact nor reveal any secret. I have heard Fox himself, while inveighing in the strongest manner against Lord North, yet bear a sort of reluctant testimony to his ability in this respect. When the subject of opening a treaty with the American Colonies was agitated in the House of Commons, towards the conclusion of the session of 1781, the First Minister having opposed on general grounds the motion then brought forward by Opposition, Fox, in the course of a long and very animated speech, observed, "The noble Lord prefers speaking indefinitely on the present question. It is frequently inconvenient for him to answer directly to matters of fact, and he therefore amuses Parliament with general ideas or propositions. For there exists not within these walls, nor in the kingdom, a more complete master of language than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor one who can more plausibly discourse on any subject." The sincerity as well as the justice of this recognition could admit of no dispute. Then advertng to Lord George Germaine's well-known fair or unguarded mode of expression, Fox added, "The noble Lord who sits near the First Lord of the Treasury is less accustomed to enter-



tain his audience with general speeches, and commonly comes directly to the fact." An unalterable suavity and equality of temper, which was natural to Lord North, enabled him to sustain unmoved the bitter sarcasms and severe accusations levelled at him from the Opposition benches. They always seemed to sink into him like a cannon-ball into a wool sack. Sometimes the coarse invectives of Alderman Sawbridge,<sup>1</sup> or the fiery sallies of George Byng,<sup>2</sup> roused him from his seeming apathy, and effected the object which the delicate irony or laboured attacks of more able adversaries had failed to produce. Once, and only once, during the time that I sat in Parliament, I witnessed his rising to a pitch of the most generous indignation. Barré attracted this storm on himself by the reproaches which he made the First Minister for oppressing the people with taxes, or, as he coarsely termed it, "scourging them to the last drop of their blood;" reproaches equally uncalled for by the occasion, as they were delivered with insulting asperity of language.

The incident happened after the close of that memorable debate when General Conway, on the 22d of February 1782, may be said to have terminated the American war; Administration only carrying the question by a single vote.<sup>3</sup> Lord North, alluding to this recent triumph of the Opposition, said, in reply to Barré,<sup>4</sup> that "he presumed the division of that evening had inflamed the Colonel's valour to such intemperate abuse," which he qualified with the epithets of "insolent and brutal." I scarcely ever recollect a scene of greater tumult and general

<sup>1</sup> John Sawbridge, Alderman of Langbourn and M.P. for the City of London, Lord Mayor, 1775-76.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Member for Middlesex.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> General Conway's motion was carried by 194 to 193. It was to the effect that farther offensive measures against the Americans should cease.—D.

<sup>4</sup> Colonel Isaac Barré was member for Calne.—ED.

disorder than took place on his pronouncing the above words. The First Minister had time during the uproar and cries of order to recollect himself, and, as soon as silence was in some measure restored, he apologised to the House for his indiscretion, adding, in a manner the most good-humoured, "To be sure, Mr. Speaker, it was wrong in me, who have been so long accustomed to parliamentary abuse, to be irritated at any expressions. I can bear, I believe, as much as any man, and I am persuaded the House will give me credit when I repeat that I support abuse as patiently as any individual." Several of the Opposition members, among whom were Colonel Barré's colleague, Dunning, and Mr. William Pitt, insisting that a personal excuse or apology was due to Barré himself as well as to the House, Lord North submitted to the expressed pleasure of the assembly. But the Colonel, *cui lumen ademptum*, by no means manifested the same suavity and complacency in accepting which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had exhibited in making, the required apology. He began a speech of considerable length by attempting to demonstrate that every member possessed a right to use with impunity the most severe epithets towards a public functionary, though that right was not reciprocal. He would even have again recapitulated the particulars of the whole transaction if Cornwall had not very properly interposed from the chair and imposed silence on him. Thus terminated the business.

Pitt did not then foresee that a day would arrive when he should stand precisely in the predicament of Lord North. No doubt Pitt and Tierney, when they met on Putney Common in 1798, exchanged shots for less provocation;<sup>1</sup> but a duel between

<sup>1</sup> The duel between Pitt and George Tierney took place on 27th May 1796.—ED.

Lord North and Barré would have excited a sort of ridicule, the former seeing very imperfectly with both eyes, and the latter possessing only one defective eye. Besides, the emotions of anger and resentment appeared to be foreign to Lord North's nature, and as if only put on occasionally in order to serve a particular purpose. He was indeed incapable of retaining enmity, though he felt and sometimes expressed contempt for those individuals who abandoned him from mean and mercenary motives. The best proof of his placability was exhibited by himself several years afterwards, accompanied with that playful wit which characterised him on every occasion. Barré and he meeting on the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells, where great civilities took place between them, "Colonel," said Lord North, "notwithstanding all that may have passed formerly in Parliament when we were on different sides, I am persuaded that there are not two men in the kingdom who would now be more happy to see each other." They were both at that time totally deprived of sight, and led about by their attendants.

Baited, harassed, and worried as he always was in Parliament during the later years of his administration, he never manifested any impatience for the termination of the session ; on the contrary, doubts were entertained among those persons who knew him best whether he did not derive a gratification from keeping the House of Commons sitting. That assembly presented, in fact, a theatre on which he acted the first personage, where he attracted almost all attention, and where his abilities rendered him hardly less conspicuous than his ministerial situation. In opening the budget he was esteemed peculiarly lucid, clear, and able. On that account it constituted a day of triumph to his friends and

supporters, who exulted in the talent which he displayed whenever he exhibited the state of the national finances or imposed new pecuniary burdens. I was twice present at his performance of this arduous task, first in 1781, and afterwards in the following year, when he executed it for the last time. Each performance appeared to me very deserving of the encomiums lavished on it; and if compared with the incapable manner in which the budget was opened by his successor, Lord John Cavendish, when he was Chancellor of Exchequer in 1783, I still continue of the same opinion. But Lord North could sustain no competition with the late Mr. Pitt, who on those, as on all other occasions, manifested a perspicuity, eloquence, rapidity, recollection, and talent altogether wonderful, which carried the audience along with him in every arithmetical statement, left no calculation obscure or ambiguous, and impressed the House at its close with tumultuous admiration.

Lord North could descend without effort, I might say with ease and dignity, from the highest offices of his public situation in the House of Commons to the lowest duties of a private member. In the spring of the year 1781, when "the secret committee for inquiring into the causes of the war in the Carnatic" was appointed by ballot, I was named one of the scrutineers to examine the names of the persons chosen to compose it. The House being about to break up, we were standing round the table, when some voices called out the name of Lord North for a scrutineer. Far from declining to engage in such an occupation, which he might easily have done on account of his official business and employments, he instantly repaired with the members nominated to one of the committee rooms. We sat till a late hour before the scrutiny was finished, and dined

together upstairs. And if he made the worst scrutineer, he was certainly the pleasantest and best companion during the whole time. He possessed a classic mind, full of information, and always enlivened by wit, as well as sweetened by good-humour. When young, he had travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and he knew the Continent well; he spoke French with facility, and was equally versed in the great writings of antiquity. It was impossible to experience dulness in his society. Even during the last years of his life, when nearly or totally blind, and labouring under many infirmities, yet his equanimity of temper never forsook him, nor even his gaiety and powers of conversation.<sup>1</sup> I have frequently seen him display the utmost cheerfulness under those circumstances so trying to human nature.

As a statesman, his enemies charged him with irresolution; but he might rather be taxed with indolence and procrastination than with want of decision. He naturally loved to postpone, though when it became necessary to resolve, he could abide firmly by his determination. Never had any Minister purer hands nor manifested less rapacity. In fact, he amassed no wealth after an administration of twelve years. When he quitted office his circumstances were by no means opulent, and he had a numerous family. I well remember that when Powis<sup>2</sup> accused him (in the course of that memorable speech which made so deep an impression on the House, pronounced in December 1781) of insensibility to the calamities of the country, and of clinging to employment from unworthy motives of an interested or pecuniary nature, Lord North repelled the imputation with the calmness and dignity

<sup>1</sup> Charming.—P.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Powys, M.P. for the county of Northampton.—ED.

of conscious integrity. "I do not desire," said he, "to make any affected display of my personal purity or disinterestedness. I will, however, declare that, with respect to my income, I would most cheerfully give it all—not only the part which I derive from the public purse, but my own private fortune—if I could thereby accelerate an honourable, speedy, and advantageous peace!" There was not, I believe, a man on the opposite side of the House, without even excepting George Byng or Sawbridge, though both were bitter enemies to the Minister, who doubted either his sincerity or his veracity. His adversaries reproached him likewise, that though incapable of personally descending to unworthy means of enriching himself, he allowed peculations or abuses to be practised by those employed under him. Sawbridge, when speaking in his place as a member of Parliament, alluding to this accusation, exclaimed with Cato—

"Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country!"

A similar charge was made against the late Mr. Pitt, who, after having been First Minister during almost his whole life, left only debts behind him. But it never entered into any man's mind, however inimical he might be, to accuse either Lord North or Mr. Pitt of making undue purchases in the public funds, or of turning their ministerial information to private purposes of pecuniary emolument. The great defect of Lord North's government arose from the easiness of his natural temper, which sometimes perhaps induced him to adopt or to defend measures that had not always the sanction of his judgment. Another and perhaps a greater evil, arising from his facility and want of energy, was, that he did not, like the great Earl of Chatham, sufficiently coerce the other members of the Cabinet,

each of whom, under Lord North, might be said to form a sort of independent department. They were, in fact, rather his co-equals than his subordinates, as they ought to have been, and the public service often suffered, as I well know, from their want of union, or from their clashing interests and private animosities. Dundas himself, while making the panegyric of his friend the First Minister, yet avowed this constitutional defect in his formation of mind. It happened on the 12th of December 1781, during one of the debates in the House of Commons preceding the termination of the American war. "The noble Lord in the blue ribband," said Dundas,<sup>1</sup> "is actuated in all his measures by the most disinterested zeal for his country. He wants only one quality to render him a great and distinguished statesman—I mean a more despotic and commanding temper." Burke affected to treat with contemptuous ridicule these eulogiums of the Lord Advocate on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "The splendour of the noble Lord's public character and administration," observed he, "can only be equalled by the sincerity of the learned Lord's praises." But whatever motives might be imputed to Dundas, the fact was indisputable. Lord North excited affection as well as respect, and awakened admiration at his variety of talents and attainments. But he knew not how to inspire terror, like the first Mr. Pitt, of whom Wilkes says, that "the keen lightnings of his eye spoke the haughty, fiery soul before his lips had pronounced a syllable."<sup>2</sup> Even his son, the late First Minister, though he wanted the features

<sup>1</sup> Henry Dundas, son of Robert Dundas, Lord President of the Court of Session. Lord Advocate in 1775, Treasurer of the Navy in 1782, Secretary of State in 1791, President of the Board of Control in 1792, created Viscount Melville in 1802, First Lord of the Admiralty in 1804, impeached in 1805, and died in 1811.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Wilkes said this of Lord Camden.—ED.

of the father, inherited no inconsiderable portion of "the lightnings of his eye."

Want of political courage cannot be justly attributed to Lord North. If we reflect that his administration equalled in duration the aggregate period occupied by the five preceding Ministers, namely, Mr. Pitt, Lord Bute, Mr. Grenville, Lord Rockingham,<sup>1</sup> and the Duke of Grafton, and if we consider how critical as well as perilous were the times, particularly during the reverses of the American war and throughout the riots of June 1780, which last convulsions might have appalled the stoutest mind, we shall not refuse him a just claim to the praise of ministerial firmness. Even his ultimate resignation in 1782, I am convinced, arose more from disgust and weariness, added to despair, than from personal apprehension or from any defect of nerves. How well aware he was of the precarious tenure by which he held his power during the last four or five years of the American war, and how suddenly he might be compelled to quit his official residence in Downing Street, may be inferred from a single circumstance. He possessed a house at the south-east angle of Grosvenor Square, which, from its situation in so elegant and fashionable a quarter of the town, would easily have found a permanent tenant. But Lord North, conscious on how frail a basis his administration reposed, would never let it for a longer period than one year. In consequence of this principle it annually changed its possessors, and being frequently taken by newly-married couples, it obtained the name of Honeymoon Hall. To the house of which I speak Lord North repaired at the termina-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chatham was Prime Minister after Lord Rockingham, but though there were six Administrations under George III. before Lord North's, there were only five Ministers, reckoning Mr. Pitt as the head of that which was in power at the accession of the King.—D.



tion of his Ministry, and continued to reside in it with his family while inhabiting London down to the time of his decease in 1792. I have often paid my respects to him there of evenings, between his last dismissal from employment in December 1783 and the close of his life, never without sentiments of admiration and respect. Though not unguarded in private conversation or in debate, he was careless in many respects to a degree hardly credible. I have heard a member of his Cabinet say that it was dangerous to trust him with state papers, which he perpetually mislaid or forgot. A letter of the first political importance, addressed to him by the King, which he had lost, after a long search was found lying wide open in a closet. A strong and mutual affection subsisted between his Majesty and him, as was natural after the many heavy storms that they had weathered together for so many years. This attachment on the part of the former, though shaken and interrupted when Lord North joined Mr. Fox in 1783, yet revived in the royal bosom at a subsequent period on Lord North becoming blind, a circumstance at which, when made known to him, his Majesty expressed the deepest concern and sympathy. He did not then probably foresee that he should himself be visited with the same affliction, a point of similarity between them which is not a little remarkable.

Besides his ministerial offices, Lord North was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Lady North enjoyed the rangership of Bushy Park. It was there that, having escaped from the "*fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*," surrounded by his daughters, he appeared peculiarly an object of esteem and of attachment, divested of all form or ostentation, lively and playful as a boy, yet never without dignity, diffusing gaiety and good-humour round him.

Even those who opposed the Minister involuntarily loved the man. I have had the honour to visit him at Bushy Park, to dine with him when no other stranger was present, and to participate of the scene that I here describe. As Pope asserts of Sir Robert Walpole, so may I on this subject say—

“Seen him I have, but in the social hour  
Of private converse, ill exchanged for power.”

The Earl of Guildford, Lord North's father, attained to a very advanced age, I believe to eighty-six, and had nearly survived his son, only dying about two years before him. So that Lord North, like his predecessor, Sir Robert Walpole, remained a member of the House of Commons during almost his whole life. Lord Guildford had been three times married, Dr. North, the Bishop of Winchester,<sup>1</sup> being his son by his second wife. Lord North, who sprung from his first marriage, secured the reversion, if I may so term it, of the Bishopric of Winchester for his brother by a piece of address. The Archbishopal see of York having become vacant on the decease of Dr. Drummond, Lord North, who knew that the King had destined that high ecclesiastical promotion for Dr. Markham, then Bishop of Chester,<sup>2</sup> determined nevertheless to ask it for Dr. North, Bishop of Worcester. Conscious that he would meet with a refusal, for which he was prepared, he ably made it subservient to the attainment of his real object, Winchester, a mitre that might be reasonably expected soon to drop from the age and infirmities of its possessor, Dr. Thomas. When Lord North preferred his request, the King replied that it was

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Brownlow North, translated from the Bishopric of Worcester to Winchester in 1781, died 12th July 1820.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. William Markham was translated to the Archbishopric of York in 1777, died 10th December 1807.—ED.

impossible to gratify him, as the Archbishopric of York must be conferred on the Bishop of Chester. The First Minister insisted, but the sovereign remained firm, recapitulated the obligations which he owed to Dr. Markham for his care of the Prince of Wales's education, and left no prospect of effecting any change in his resolution. "Your Majesty, then," said Lord North, "will, I hope, have no objection to give my brother the See of Winchester whenever it may become vacant?" "Oh, by all means," answered the King, "you may rely upon it;" a promise which soon afterwards received its accomplishment.

I will conclude the subject of Lord North, on which I dwell with complacency, by observing, that though he cannot be esteemed a great statesman in the most comprehensive sense, though he neither possessed those vast energies of character and extraordinary war talents which have immortalised the first Mr. Pitt, nor that splendid assemblage of qualities fitted for the conduct of a popular government which distinguished the second Mr. Pitt, though Lord North was even a very unfortunate as well as a most unpopular Minister during the far greater part or the whole course of his administration, yet he possessed distinguished claims to national esteem. The American war formed the weight which dragged him down, a load that would have sunk the great Lord Chatham himself if he had attempted to lift it, notwithstanding his endowments of mind sustained by popular favour. In the year 1758, when that eminent statesman was called to the direction of public affairs, not by the sovereign, but by the nation, he had only to conduct and point the resources of the country against the two branches of the House of Bourbon. His son, in 1793, beheld himself placed as the champion of order, morals,

religion, and monarchical government in opposition to the most sanguinary and detestable republic (if a fierce democracy, whose sceptre was the guillotine, could be with justice entitled to that denomination) which ever arose among men. Both Ministers were in some measure sustained and impelled by the very contest. But Lord North, who derived little support from his countrymen, and none from the nature of the war, could only look to the crown for protection against public clamour in and out of Parliament. In the distribution of honours and dignities he was far more sparing than his successor, a fact of which we shall be convinced if we compare the list of peerages created between 1770 and 1782, with those made by Mr. Pitt, when First Minister, within the same portion of time during any period of his administration. Nor was Lord North equally profuse of the public money as Mr. Pitt ultimately became, whatever severity of censure he underwent for his extravagance or negligence in the management and expenditure of the finances. No impeachment of any subordinate Minister, or of any member of his Cabinet, ever took place for defalcation or misapplication of sums which passed through his hands, as we witnessed in 1805.<sup>1</sup> Yet the Opposition in the Lower House of Parliament during the whole progress of the American war exceeded in numbers, and at least equalled in virulence, the minority which impeached Lord Melville.

As a man, considered in every private relation, even in his very weaknesses, Lord North was most amiable. Under that point of view his character will rise on a comparison with any First Minister of Great Britain who existed during the course of the eighteenth century, not excepting Lord Godolphin,

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the case of Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty.—ED.

Mr. Pelham, or the Marquis of Rockingham.<sup>1</sup> The two former individuals were justly accused of a passion for play, which accompanied them through life, a vice from which Lord North was wholly exempt. Burnet, who recounts the fact relative to the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, says, "He loved gaming the most of any man of business I ever knew, and gave one reason for it, because it delivered him from the obligation to talk much." Dodington, when relating Mr. Pelham's attachment to the same ruinous gratification, adds, that he studiously concealed it with the utmost care. Lord North possessed better intellectual resources in himself. He possessed likewise the highest sources of enjoyment in his family, surrounded by his numerous and amiable children. The Marquis of Rockingham, however personally estimable, was childless, and Lord Bute's fireside was not characterised by the same expansion of the heart, the same emancipation from all severity of form, or the same ebullitions of fancy and intellect. His immediate predecessor, the Duke of Grafton, respecting whom "Junius" observes, when speaking of his domestic qualities, "Your Grace has now made the complete revolution of the political zodiac, from the *scorpion* in which you stung Lord Chatham, to the hopes of a *virgin* in the house of Bloomsbury;" the Duke could support no competition with Lord North in the endearing charities of life, where the Minister becomes merged in the father, the husband, and the individual.<sup>2</sup> If we would try to find his equal in these endowments and virtues, we must remount to Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, or to Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. Every beholder,

<sup>1</sup> Sidney, Lord Godolphin, under Queen Anne; the Right Hon. Henry Pelham, under George II.; and Lord Rockingham, under George III.—D.

<sup>2</sup> The friends of the Duke of Grafton represent him as most amiable in his family at Euston, where he lived to an advanced age.—ED.

while contemplating the monument where rest the remains of the great Earl of Chatham or of the second Mr. Pitt, erected to their memory by national gratitude, must be penetrated with emotions of admiration and respect; but all those who personally knew Lord North or had ever mixed with him in society, when regarding his tomb would involuntarily find their eyes suffused in tears.

The post of Secretary of State for the Northern Department<sup>1</sup> was at that time filled by Lord Stormont,<sup>2</sup> a nobleman who, having passed great part of his life in a diplomatic capacity on the Continent, principally at the Courts of Dresden and Vienna, necessarily possessed a considerable knowledge of the interests and politics of Europe. He had, nevertheless, manifested no great vigilance nor displayed any superior penetration during his recent embassy at Paris, where, it was commonly believed, he had been deceived by the protestations or duped by the artifices of Maurepas and of Vergennes, previous to the open interference of France in the affairs of America. I well remember Powis,<sup>3</sup> when speaking of him on the 8th of March 1782, in the course of a speech which made a deep impression on the House of Commons, observed, "Lord Stormont fills the post of one of the Secretaries of State. But what treaties has he ever signed? In what instance has he ever displayed the talents of a statesman or a politician? Perhaps he may have received at his office, and notified to the King in due form, accounts of the birth, the marriage, or

<sup>1</sup> In 1782 an Act of Parliament was passed abolishing the Secretaryship for the American Department, and fixing the number of Secretaries of State at three—one for the Home Department, one for Foreign, and one for Colonial Affairs.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> David, seventh Viscount Stormont, born 1727. He succeeded his uncle, William, first Earl of Mansfield, in that title 1793, and died three years afterwards.—D.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Powys, M.P. for county of Northampton.—ED.

the death of foreign princes; but all his politics seem there to terminate. How far he can be regarded as a proper Minister to negotiate peace with the American Colonies we may infer from one of his answers to them:—‘His Majesty’s Ministers receive applications from rebels only when they sue for pardon.’” Yet what other reply could Lord Stormont then make, representing, as he did, the King whose ambassador he was at the Court of Versailles? Decorated with the insignia of the Order of the Thistle, his person, noble and imposing, presented the appearance of a man of quality; but his manners, destitute of amenity, stiff and constrained, were not calculated to ingratiate or to seduce. His enemies accused him of parsimony, and his greatest admirers admitted that he bore no resemblance to Timon, either in his household, his table, or his general expense. His near alliance to the Earl of Mansfield, of whom he was the nephew and collateral heir, if it conferred no claim to popular favour, unquestionably conduced to render him more acceptable at St. James’s. Even his opponents admitted him to possess judgment as well as application; and whenever he rose in the House of Peers, he displayed a thorough acquaintance with the subject on which he spoke, together with great precision of language and force of argument.

The Earl of Hillsborough,<sup>1</sup> who held the Southern Department, was a man of elegant manners, and wanted neither ability nor attention to public business; but his natural endowments, however solid, did not rise above mediocrity. He had owed his political as well as personal elevation in life more to his good sense, penetration, suavity, and address,

<sup>1</sup> Wills Hill, second Lord Hillsborough, created Earl of Hillsborough in England, afterwards Marquis of Downshire in Ireland.—  
ED.

than to any intellectual superiority. At St. James's he was more at home than at Westminster, and might rather be esteemed an accomplished courtier than a superior Minister. His mind was indeed highly cultivated, but it seemed to be rather the information of a gentleman than the knowledge of a statesman. I have seen him much embarrassed and disconcerted in the session of 1781, when called on officially in the House of Lords to explain or to justify the measures adopted in Bengal,—an embarrassment which arose from his ignorance of names, places, and circumstances in that quarter of the globe, with which, as Secretary of State for the East Indies, he ought to have been acquainted. We must, however, recollect that very few persons, except such as were locally connected with India, had then attained any accurate information respecting the Company's territories, revenues, and affairs. Of this assertion I could adduce many proofs. In February 1782, when Lord Shelburne, while speaking in the House of Peers, made allusion to "a king or supreme Rajah of the Mahrattas," he felt himself compelled to explain to their Lordships the nature and narrow limits of that nominal sovereignty, with which, as well as with the office of "Peishwah," or efficient ruler of the Mahratta empire, nine-tenths of his audience were utterly unacquainted. I recollect the astonishment, not unmingled with some degree of ridicule, excited in the House of Commons on Governor Johnstone's<sup>1</sup> first mention and description of the harbour of Trincomalee in the island of Ceylon, a bay which probably till that occasion had never been heard

<sup>1</sup> George Johnstone, third son of Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, appointed Governor of West Florida in 1765, for many years M.P. for Cockermouth. He died 28th January 1787. He is mentioned frequently in Walpole's letters, and always unfavourably.—ED.



of by the greater part of the county members. Though the irruption of Hyder Ally into the Carnatic in 1780 powerfully awakened and attracted the national attention to the subject, it was Fox's memorable Bill, followed at a short interval by Hastings' trial, that diffused over the whole kingdom an eagerness for Oriental knowledge.

But Lord George Germain, who presided over the American Department, excited from a variety of causes far more public consideration, while he presented a fairer mark for parliamentary attack or for popular declamation than either of the other Secretaries of State. His recognised abilities, the circumstance of his being a member of the House of Commons, not, like his two colleagues, removed from the front ranks of warfare by their situation in the Upper House of Parliament, even the events of his former life when commanding the British forces in Germany,<sup>1</sup> and above all, the object of the war in which we were engaged—a war that at the commencement of 1781 still professed to be the subjugation of the revolted Colonies—these united circumstances rendered him, after Lord North, the most prominent person in administration. As I had the honour to enjoy a place in his friendship, and to live with him during the later years of his life on terms of great intimacy, I may pretend to have known him well. Nor will I deny that I am partial to his memory, but that partiality will never induce me to pervert or misrepresent any fact, though I am aware that it may unintentionally bias my opinions. He had completed his sixty-fifth year at this time, but a frame of body naturally robust and a vigorous constitution secured him almost uninterrupted health, together with the enjoyment of all his faculties, among

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to his conduct at the battle of Minden.—ED.

which his memory was conspicuous. In his person, which rose to near six feet, he was muscular, and capable of enduring much bodily as well as mental fatigue. Though his features were strongly pronounced and saturnine, yet, considered together as a whole, their effect by no means displeased. An air of high birth and dignity illuminated by strong sense pervaded every lineament of his face. His countenance indicated intellect, particularly his eye, the motions of which were quick and piercing. On first acquaintance, his manner and air impressed those who approached him with an idea of proud reserve ; but no man in private society unbent himself more, or manifested less self-importance. In the midst of his family—for he rarely dined from home, except at the Cabinet dinners—and in the company of a few select friends, he soon forgot the toils annexed to public life, the asperities of debate, and the vexations of office. Even after the latest nights in the House of Commons he always sat down to a delicately served table, drank a pint of claret, unbent his mind, and passed in review the incidents of the preceding evening. It was then that his conversation became most entertaining, seasoned with curious anecdotes collected during the course of a long life passed in the highest circles, amidst the greatest affairs in England, Ireland, Scotland, and on the Continent, where he had served, embracing the secret history of the present and of the two late reigns. Nor was his information limited to the accession of the Hanoverian line, but extended to the preceding sovereigns. The Duchess of Dorset, his mother, had been a maid of honour to Queen Anne, and his father, the Duke, remembered William III. When Lord George entered on the events of those times, he might be said to raise the curtain that concealed from vulgar eyes the palaces of Whitehall, of St.

James's, of Kensington, and of Hampton Court. The private adventures, all the minute recitals calculated to awaken as well as to gratify curiosity, many particulars relative to the illustrious persons of both sexes who composed the Courts of William and of Anne, particulars which, though the gravity of history may disdain, yet which delight and instruct ; such were the frequent subjects of his discourse. Had I committed to paper at that period the materials which he profusely threw before me, I might have composed a work of the highest interest to the present age and to posterity ; but mine are only reminiscences.

Though Lord George Germain was so highly born, his education had not altogether corresponded with his extraction, and he owed far more to nature than to cultivation. He had, indeed, been brought up in the College of Dublin, but he possessed little information derived from books, nor had he improved his mind by study in the course of subsequent years. Even after his retreat from public employment in the decline of life, when at Drayton, where he possessed a fine library, he rarely opened an author except for a short time on his return from coursing, shooting, riding, or other favourite exercises. He had visited Paris when young with his father, the Duke of Dorset, and the French language was familiar to him ; but with Horace, Tacitus, or Cicero he had formed little acquaintance. His initiation into public life, politics, and parliament took place too early to admit of storing his mind with classic images or ideas. Though he was versed in English history since the time of Elizabeth, during which period of near two centuries some one of his immediate ancestors had almost always sat, and sometimes presided, in the councils of the sovereign, he was not conversant in

our annals of an earlier date. But, on the other hand, he had witnessed much with his own eyes, he had heard still more from others ; he seized with ease on whatever was submitted to his understanding, and he forgot nothing.

In business he was rapid yet clear and accurate, rather negligent in his style, which was that of a gentleman and a man of the world, unstudied and frequently careless, even in his official dispatches. But there was no obscurity or ambiguity in his compositions. Capable of application in cases of necessity, he nevertheless passed little time at the desk or in the closet ; and while Secretary of State under critical as well as perilous circumstances, when every courier brought or might bring accounts the most disastrous, no man who saw him at table, or of an evening in his drawing-room, would have suspected from his deportment and conversation that the responsibility of the American war reposed principally on his shoulders. More than one member of the Cabinet was supposed to enjoy a greater degree of personal acceptability with the King, but none exercised the privilege of speaking with more freedom to him. Lord George seldom hazarded to ask favours ; but when he undertook any cause, he rarely receded till he had obtained the object. Dr. Eliot,<sup>1</sup> who then practised physic with some celebrity, and of whose medical skill Lord George entertained a high opinion, induced him to exert his interest at court for procuring the Doctor to be created a Baronet. The King, who disliked Eliot personally, and regarded his professional talents with as little partiality, displayed much repugnance to grant the request. Yielding however at last, "Well, my

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Eliot, Bart., M.D., born at Peebles, knighted in 1776, and subsequently created a Baronet. He edited an edition of Dr. John Fothergill's works, 1781, and died 7th November 1786.—ED.

Lord," said he, "since you desire it, let it be; but remember he shall not be my physician." "No, sir," answered Lord George, bowing, "he shall be your Majesty's Baronet and my physician."<sup>1</sup> The King laughed, and Eliot was raised to the Baronetage.

In the House of Commons, down to the last hour that Lord George remained a member of that assembly, he was constantly the object of the severest and most pointed attacks of the Opposition, who always hoped to force from his irritability the secret or the fact which they had vainly attempted to extort from the apathy and tranquillity of Lord North. In this endeavour they frequently succeeded. Lord George, goaded by reproaches often fictitious, frequently unjust, and always exaggerated, generally started up sooner or later, repelled the charges advanced, and in so doing sometimes put the adversary in possession of the very matter which they sought to discover. I have continually witnessed the fact to which I allude. Fox himself admitted this characteristic feature of Lord George's formation of mind. I recollect that during the debate which took place relative to the capture of the island of St. Eustatius in the session of 1781, Fox, while he censured most severely the proceedings of our commanders in their confiscation of the private property there found, acknowledged "the unwary frankness of the Secretary of State (Lord George), as a quality for which he was sometimes praised *in* the House of Commons and blamed *out* of it." A still more conspicuous exhibition of this merit or of this defect in his character,—for I am uncertain under which class it ought to be ranked,—I witnessed only

<sup>1</sup> "This anecdote we have heard told, we believe more truly, of the first Lord Melville and Sir Walter Farquhar."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 212.—ED.

a few days later in the same session. Burke having brought forward a very pointed and serious charge against Government for neglect in not supplying the garrison of Gibraltar, then besieged by the Spaniards, with gunpowder, in consequence of which egregious want of precaution Admiral Darby, when sent to the relief of the fortress, was reduced to the necessity of stripping his fleet in order to leave two thousand barrels of powder in the magazine, Sir Charles Cocks, Mr. Kenrick, Sir Charles Frederick, and other members of the Board of Ordnance, who were present, attempted to contradict the story as not authentic, or of which they had at least no information. But George Byng persisting in the accusation and demanding a more satisfactory answer, the American Secretary rose and observed, that though he could only speak from rumour, and had no official nor other intelligence on the point to communicate, yet that his own opinion was the report had a foundation in truth. He added, that if it should so turn out, Admiral Darby had acted in a very meritorious manner by leaving for the supply of the garrison whatever quantity of gunpowder he could spare without endangering the safety of his own fleet. Lord North remained silent during this avowal of Lord George, and took no part whatever in the debate.

Lord George spoke, as he wrote, without much premeditation from the impulse of the occasion, in animated rather than in correct language, with vehemence, but not without dignity. His voice was powerful and his figure commanding, though he did not always thoroughly possess himself nor display the coolness demanded for so trying a situation as that of American Secretary. His opponents, who well knew, availed themselves of this defect in his formation of mind. On the other hand, the keen-

ness of his sight gave him a prodigious advantage over Lord North when in the House of Commons. Lord George Germain had no sooner taken his seat on the Treasury Bench than he pervaded with a glance of his eye the Opposition benches, saw who attended as well as who were absent, and formed his conclusions accordingly on the business of the day. He used to say that for those who were enabled to exercise this faculty, everything was to be *seen* in the House, where, on the contrary, nothing except declamation was to be gained by the *ear*. No man better understood the management of Parliament, the prolongation or acceleration of a debate, according to the temper or the number of the members present, and every detail of official dexterity or address requisite in conducting affairs submitted to a popular assembly. To all these arts of government he had served two long and severe apprenticeships in Ireland as secretary to his father, the Duke of Dorset, when successively Lord Lieutenant of that kingdom. In political courage and firmness he was not deficient. I have seen him in circumstances which sufficiently put those qualities to the proof towards the close of the American war, when intelligence arrived of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at York Town; a disaster of the most irreparable nature, the load of which fell almost exclusively on himself.

While summing up Lord George's character<sup>1</sup> it is so impossible not to think of the business at Minden, and consequently not to allude to it, that my silence on this subject would seem to imply my conviction of the justice of the sentence passed on him by the court-martial. On the other hand, I feel

<sup>1</sup> Richard Cumberland, who served under Lord George at the Board of Trade, writes of him in the warmest terms (Memoirs, 1807, vol. i. p. 393).—ED.

how delicate and invidious a matter it is on which to touch, even at the distance of more than half a century. Yet, as *personal* and *political* courage, though altogether dissimilar, are commonly considered to have an intimate connection, as we are even with difficulty induced to allow or duly to estimate any virtues, however eminent, in a man whom we suppose to have been deficient in the former of those essential qualities, as general prejudice is certainly in Lord George's disfavour, and as I may claim to possess some information on the subject, I shall enter briefly into the disquisition.

I lay no stress on Lord George Germain's illustrious extraction, since we all know that the greatest houses have produced the most degenerate descendants, instances of which in point, to which, from motives of delicacy and personal consideration, I forbear alluding, have occurred in our own times. Pope justly exclaims—

“What can ennoble slaves, or sots, or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!”

It is, nevertheless, an incentive to noble achievements when we descend from those who have performed such actions. The memorable letter of Edward, Earl of Dorset, describing his duel with Lord Bruce under the reign of James I., commemorated in the “Guardian,” and the celebrated song beginning,

“To all you ladies now on land,  
We men at sea indite,”

which was composed by Charles, Earl of Dorset, Lord George's grandfather, as we are assured, on the night before the engagement between the English fleet and that of Holland, commanded by Op-



dam, under Charles II.'s reign,<sup>1</sup> these two productions, which are as universally known as the language in which they are written, sufficiently attest that he drew his lineage from men of courage. His maternal grandfather, Marshal Colyear,<sup>2</sup> brother of the first Earl of Portmore, and governor of Namur, with whom Lord George passed much time in his youth, had grown grey in all the sieges and battles of the Low Countries under William III. As soon as England took a part in the war occasioned by the accession of Maria Theresa in 1743, Lord George was sent to the Continent, where he served, if not with marked distinction, certainly without the slightest reproach, under the command of Lord Stair and of George II. In 1745, at the battle of Fontenoy, where such a number of our officers fell, he received a musket-ball in the breast, and was thrown upon a waggon with many others. He had preserved the uniform that he wore on that day, which I have seen and examined, bearing on it the mark of the ball, corresponding to the place where he was struck, and other holes in the skirts of the coat perforated by bullets. During the domestic rebellion that followed the defeat of Fontenoy, being recalled to his own country, he accompanied William, Duke of Cumberland, from the commencement to the close of the insurrection in Scotland, where great commendation was bestowed on his services.

Among the Dorset papers, which I have seen,

<sup>1</sup> This was on June 3, 1665, and Prior is the authority for the statement; but there is reason to doubt the statement that the Earl of Dorset (then Lord Buckhurst) wrote his song the night before a battle. Pepys writes in his Diary, under date January 2, 1664-65, "I occasioned much mirth with a ballet I brought with me, made from the seamen at sea to their ladies in town;" so that it must have been written at least half a year before the naval engagement mentioned in the text.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Philip Colyear, a distinguished soldier in the reigns of William III. and Queen Anne, created a field-marshal, and died in 1747 at the age of ninety.—ED.

were preserved a series of letters addressed by him to the Duke, his father, containing many interesting incidents of the years 1745 and 1746, while he was serving in the Highlands against the rebels. On the breaking out of the war in 1756 he accompanied the late Duke of Marlborough<sup>1</sup> on those desultory expeditions to the coast of Normandy and Brittany, productive of little benefit and of still less honour, when we bombarded St. Malo and demolished Cherbourg. After the demise of the Duke, which took place at Münster<sup>2</sup> towards the close of 1758, it is well known that Lord George commanded the British forces during the ensuing campaign, and, in particular, at the battle of Minden. That he did not advance at the head of the cavalry, on that occasion, with the celerity that might have been wished, and that his delay is ever to be regretted on a national account, because, if he had so advanced, the defeat of the enemy would have been much more complete; that consequently he became a just subject of blame or of censure, if we judge by *the result* and not by *the motive*; all these points must be conceded to his accusers. But the only question is, whether he manifested any such backwardness to lead on the horse, after he received Prince Ferdinand's orders for that purpose, as justly rendered him liable to the suspicion of reluctance or to the imputation of cowardice?

The depositions of Lieutenant-Colonels Ligonier, Sloper, and Fitzroy, would certainly seem to fix on him either one or the other of these charges. But the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Hotham, as

<sup>1</sup> Charles, second Duke. He was the son of the great Duke's daughter, Anne, Countess of Sunderland, and succeeded to the Dukedom in 1733, on the death of the first Duke's eldest daughter and heiress, Harriett, Countess of Godolphin, who died childless.—D.

<sup>2</sup> He was the commander-in-chief of all the British forces serving on the Lower Rhine.—D.

well as the positive testimony<sup>1</sup> of Captains Lloyd and Smith, two of Lord George's aides-de-camp, appear as completely to exculpate him. There were even negative, if not positive, doubts stated by Hotham and Smith relative to the accuracy, not to say the truth or existence, of the asserted conversation held by Colonels Fitzroy and Ligonier with Lord George, when they successively delivered him Prince Ferdinand's orders. Captain Smith, Sir Sydney Smith's father, I very intimately knew, who was himself a man of distinguished personal courage,<sup>2</sup> strictly conscientious, and incapable of asserting any fact that he disbelieved. He never entertained an idea that Lord George was withheld by unbecoming personal motives from advancing at Minden. Even on the testimony of Fitzroy, Sloper, and Ligonier, it plainly appeared that either Prince Ferdinand's orders were in themselves contradictory, or were misunderstood by the aides-de-camp, or were imperfectly delivered by them. Lord George displayed evident irresolution under those circumstances. He first halted, and afterwards did not cause the cavalry to advance with the rapidity that would have ensured the enemy's entire defeat. Probably similar accidents happen in almost every great engagement. But the world, which pardons the excesses of intemperate courage, never forgives the slightest appearance of backwardness in the field. Prince Rupert, who three times ruined the affairs of Charles I., who, by his impetuous valour, lost him the three battles of Edgehill, of Marston Moor, and of Naseby, is pardoned by posterity, while Admiral Byng<sup>3</sup> and Lord George Sackville remain

<sup>1</sup> Pshah!—P.

<sup>2</sup> Pshah!—P.

<sup>3</sup> Shot on board the "Monarch" at Spithead in 1757. He was charged with falling short of his duty in an engagement off Minorca in 1756. His epitaph truly described him as a martyr to political

under imputation. Such, however unjust it seems, will ever be the lot of military men who venture to remain stationary when they might go forward in action.

It must, nevertheless, excite no small surprise that Prince Ferdinand, though he alludes in the general orders issued on the day following the battle to Lord George's supposed misconduct, yet, in the first dispatches sent to this country containing an account of the victory, made no public mention whatever of it, and some days elapsed before the Prince preferred any formal accusation against him. I have seen among the Dorset papers a series of Lord George's letters to his father, written from the allied army during that campaign, extending to within very few days of the action at Minden; and I have likewise perused the notes addressed to Lionel, Duke of Dorset, from the Foreign Office of the Secretary of State here, on the arrival of the official intelligence of the engagement, felicitating the Duke on the result of a battle so glorious to this country, and in which he must necessarily feel so deep a personal interest. Not a word nor a hint appears in these notes of Lord George's supposed want of alacrity. How are we to explain this line of conduct in the Prince? It would seem as if the charge should have instantly followed the act.

George II., it must be remembered, was at this time near seventy-six years old, strongly prejudiced, as we well know, in favour of his relative and countryman, Prince Ferdinand, and naturally chagrined at an event which, even though it should have been publicly recognised as the mere effect of misconception or mistake respecting the orders sent by the commander-in-chief, yet equally afforded subject

persecution. It was in reference to him that Voltaire said that we killed one Admiral "pour encourager les autres."—D.

for regret on account of its injurious public consequences. Under these circumstances the court-martial took place, and the King's sentiments relative to Lord George's culpability were universally known throughout the country. It is a fact that his late Majesty sent him a message acquainting him of his own determination to put into execution the sentence of the court, whatever it might be, without delay or mitigation. Lord George was tried in March 1760. If the late King had died in October 1759, instead of October 1760, or if Lord George's trial had taken place in 1761, might not the result, in all probability, have been far less severe, or altogether different, under a new reign, when the clamour of the hour had subsided?

Other considerations come to the aid of these reflections. In 1759 and 1760 Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick occupied a high place in the admiration of the English public, by whom he was considered as only inferior in the field to *the Protestant hero*, as we then absurdly denominated Frederick, king of Prussia. But Prince Ferdinand's popularity proved of very short duration. As early as January 1761 we may see in "Dodington's Diary" how low the Prince had fallen in general estimation, and what serious accusations were brought against him. Dodington, relating the particulars of a conversation which he had at that time with the Earl of Bute, says, "I told him that I thought Prince Ferdinand was become as unpopular in the army as he was once popular; that he was accused of three great heads of malversation. The first was that he had exacted complete pay for uncomplete corps; the second, that not one shilling of all those devastating contributions had been carried to the public account; the third, that he had received good money and had paid the troops in bad to a very great

amount, and at a great discount." These charges, most injurious to his character, do not appear to have ever been refuted. The precedent of Admiral Byng, shot very unjustly on an accusation of cowardice, was recent. If the members of the military tribunal who tried Lord George believed that he had committed the same crime as the one imputed to that unfortunate naval commander, why did they not pass on him the same sentence? There can be only one answer. The evidence brought forward fell short of proof, and under those circumstances they doubtless were not convinced that he merited death. But still, as the prejudices or prevailing opinions of the time hardly admitted, on the other hand, of his acquittal, they cashiered him. It is for posterity to revise, perhaps to reverse, that sentence, not juridically, but as a court of opinion deciding in the last resort on all human actions submitted to their censure or approval. I have endeavoured fairly to state the leading circumstances on which they may found a judgment.

Lord George's duel with Governor Johnstone is a well-known fact.<sup>1</sup> On that occasion, even by his adversary's admission, he exhibited perfect self-possession, presenting so fair and erect a mark, while he calmly waited for the Governor's fire, that it extorted from him an involuntary testimony to Lord George's courage. The late Lord Sydney, then Mr. Thomas Townshend, who was his Lordship's second, equally witnessed and attested his coolness. How can we believe or conceive that such a man,

<sup>1</sup> "Recent as this event is, it is almost forgotten in a duel that happened yesterday between Lord George Germaine and a Governor Johnstone, the latter of whom abused the former grossly last Friday in the House of Commons. Lord George behaved with the utmost coolness and intrepidity. Each fired two pistols, and Lord George's first was shattered in his hand by Johnstone's fire, but neither was hurt. However, whatever Lord George Sackville was, Lord George Germaine is a hero."—*Walpole to Mann*, December 18, 1770.—ED.

on such a field as Minden, before so many spectators, would, from personal fear, have at once covered himself with ignominy? As little is it proved, whatever we may suspect, that motives of personal animosity to Prince Ferdinand, with whom we know he was on bad terms, operated on Lord George's mind, and impelled him to delay moving forward with the cavalry to complete the victory. It is evident, on the calmest and most dispassionate review of the transaction, which has obtained such a melancholy celebrity in our military annals under George II., that an ambiguity in Prince Ferdinand's orders to Lord George, or a contradiction in them, produced the whole misfortune. We may indeed assert or believe that the British commander intentionally misunderstood them; but where was the proof adduced of that fact? Captain Ligonier brings an order for the *whole* cavalry to advance. Colonel Fitzroy, almost in the same moment, orders only the *British* cavalry to advance. On receiving these opposite messages Lord George halts the cavalry, while he gallops up to Prince Ferdinand in order to receive his personal instructions. There might be error in this delay, and public injury might accrue from it, as Prince Ferdinand asserts did actually ensue, when, in his "general orders" above alluded to, he says that if "the Marquis of Granby had been at the head of the cavalry of the right wing, he is persuaded the decision of that day would have been more complete and more brilliant." Still there is no proof of Lord George's voluntary misconstruction of the orders, or of his reluctance to execute them, and the error might have originated in mistake as well as in volition. How easily would the whole misfortune have been rendered impossible if Prince Ferdinand had, like Prince Eugene of Savoy, whom he might have copied on this point, only sent

one of his successive orders written in *pencil*. Prince Eugene expressly says in his Memoirs, "I derived much benefit from always carrying in my pocket a pencil, to write in the officer's commanding book the order which I gave him to carry." Such was the constant practice of that illustrious commander when in the field, a practice peculiarly demanded in the instance before us, if Prince Ferdinand thought that he had any reason to doubt Lord George's prompt and ready obedience. I return from this digression.

The Earl of Sandwich,<sup>1</sup> who had presided during ten years at the head of the Admiralty, was universally admitted to possess eminent talents, great application to the duties of his office, and thorough acquaintance with public business. Like Lord George Germain, he was tall, of a vigorous frame, apparently designed for longevity, and his physiognomy full of expression; but conviviality rather than forethought or profound reflection characterised his features. A distinguished votary of wit, conviviality, and pleasure, like Wilmot, the licentious Earl of Rochester, from whom he lineally descended, he had nevertheless been early initiated into political life, and was sent by Mr. Pelham, then First Minister, as one of the plenipotentiaries in 1748 at the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. In all his official functions he displayed perspicuity as well as dispatch. No naval officer who stated his demand to the First Lord of the Admiralty with becoming brevity ever waited for an answer; and he was accustomed to say, "If any man will draw up his

<sup>1</sup> John George Montague, fourth Earl of Sandwich, born in November 1718, First Lord of the Admiralty in 1748, Secretary of State in 1763, and again in 1770. In 1771 he again became First Lord of the Admiralty, an office he retained until Lord North's resignation. He died 30th April 1792.—ED.



case, and put his name at the foot of the first page, I will give him an immediate reply. Where he compels me to turn over the sheet, he must wait my leisure." How laconically yet forcibly he could write, with what conciseness and severity blended, he exhibited in his memorable note to Mr. Eden, afterwards created Lord Auckland. That gentleman, when he quitted his political friends in 1786 in order to join Mr. Pitt, who sent him over to Paris for the purpose of negotiating the commercial treaty, addressed a circular letter to them, endeavouring to explain and to justify his line of conduct. Lord Sandwich, in answer to the letter that he received on the occasion, instantly wrote back these words: "Sir, your letter is before me, and it will presently be behind me. I remain, sir, your most humble servant."<sup>1</sup> For the accuracy of this anecdote I think I may answer, having received it from my intimate friend, the late Earl of Sandwich, his son; though the "*Quarterly Review*" has had the impudence and folly to assert that "the joke was the property of Lord North." Polite, accessible, and endowed with great natural capacity, it might have been expected that as First Lord of the Admiralty he would acquire the public favour in no less a degree than he enjoyed the confidence of his sovereign. But many causes conduced to render him an object of popular dislike or disapprobation, some of which were personal, others political. At an early period of his Majesty's reign Wilkes and Churchill combined their powers in order to expose his character to universal condemnation. The former in his "*Letter to the Electors of Aylesbury*," written from Paris in October 1764, designates Lord Sandwich as "the most abandoned

<sup>1</sup> "This is the property of Lord North. Lord Sandwich was not of a turn to make such a reply."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 212.—ED.

man of the age ;" while Churchill in his poem of the "Candidate," speaking of him, says—

"Vice, bold substantial Vice, puts in her claim,  
And stamps him perfect in the books of shame.  
Observe his follies well, and you would swear  
Folly had been his first, his only care.  
Observe his vices, you'll that oath disown,  
And swear that he was born for vice alone.  
Search earth, search hell, the devil cannot find  
An agent like Lothario to his mind."

However unjust or exaggerated might be these accusations, yet we must own that the part he took in denouncing the "Essay on Woman"<sup>1</sup> to the House of Peers laid him open to the charge of breach of confidence, and attracted towards him the severest animadversions of the author of that poem, whose pen inflicted the most incurable wounds. Though Lord Sandwich had already attained at this time his sixty-second year, his licentious mode of life seemed more befitting a Minister of Charles II. than a confidential servant of George III. His fortune, which did not altogether correspond with his high rank and habits of gratification or expense, was supposed likewise to lay him open to seduction, or at least to render him capable of listening to propositions that a more independent man might have disdained. Even his warmest adherents reluctantly admitted that the unanimity and concord which previous to his being placed at the head of the Admiralty characterised the British navy were become extinct under his administration. I well recollect the Honourable Captain John Luttrell, who, in January 1782, when Fox attacked Lord Sandwich, defended him with great zeal and no ordinary ability in the House of Commons, yet did not

<sup>1</sup> This parody of Pope's "Essay on Man" was attributed to Wilkes, but is said to have been written by Potter.—ED.

attempt to deny this feature of the time. "At present," said he, "the navy is torn to pieces by dissensions. Officers scarcely ever see each other except on duty. Nor have they any longer access to the tables of their superiors, as formerly, when an Anson, or Boscawen, a Hawke, a Saunders, and a Keppel, commanded the fleets of England. Then all was cordiality, ardour, and affection. The commanders took a pride in teaching the inferior orders their professional duties. Now party, disunion, mutual jealousy, and want of confidence are universal." It would, however, be unjust to attribute so deplorable a change to the character, system, or conduct of the Minister who presided at the head of the naval department. It originated in the nature and spirit of a civil contest which unhappily divided in sentiment the whole nation, and, like the wars under Charles I., though not in so extended a degree, pervaded the island from one extremity to the other, tearing asunder, in many instances, the closest connections of friendship, or even of consanguinity. Ambition and self-interest, two of the most powerful impulses to human action, were not always proof to political opinions during the course of the American war, as we witnessed in various instances.

Lord Sandwich's enemies, who were numerous and violent, maintained that even official appointments were sometimes conferred under conditions not honourable to the First Lord of the Admiralty. Naval commanders sent to important stations, on which great emoluments might be naturally expected to arise from captures, were asserted to have a fellow-feeling with their patron, and even to divide with him a certain proportion of their pecuniary acquisitions. However improbable or unproved were these assertions, which doubtless originated in party malevolence, yet, as names and minute particulars were

added or invented, they obtained general credit and made a deep impression. All the eloquence of Fox in one House of Parliament, and all the laborious pertinacity of the Duke of Richmond in the other, had been employed during successive sessions, not without effect, in impressing the public mind with unfavourable sentiments towards him. Palliser was represented as the object of his partiality, Keppel as the victim of his persecution. During the riots of the preceding summer, in June 1780, he had been marked out by the mob as a sacrifice, and narrowly escaped the effects of their blind animosity.

There can remain no reasonable doubt in the mind of any impartial man that when Lord Sandwich succeeded Sir Edward Hawke<sup>1</sup> in that great office, the Admiralty, on the able and vigorous administration of which the consequence, power, and grandeur of Britain so eminently depend, he found the navy in a state of decline and depression. An injudicious narrow system of economy had reduced the fleet to such a point during the seven years subsequent to the peace, that in 1770, when we were menaced with a rupture on the business of the Falkland Islands,<sup>2</sup> it was found impossible speedily to fit out a force competent to impose the law on Spain. Lord Hawke, great on the element of the water, where he had nearly annihilated the French fleet in 1759, made a very inefficient First Lord of the Admiralty. I believe this fact was not contested by the warmest admirers of that illustrious commander, though Admiral Keppel, in a speech pronounced towards the close of the American war, when every species of

<sup>1</sup> Sir Edward Hawke (afterwards Lord Hawke) was First Lord of the Admiralty from 1766 to 1771.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Spain surrendered her claims in 1771. They were unoccupied for many years, till colonists from Buenos Ayres landed there. This colony was broken up by the Americans in 1831. Since 1833 the British flag has been permanently placed at Port St. Louis.—D.

obloquy was heaped on Lord Sandwich with a view to drive him out of office, alluding to Sir Edward Hawke, denominated him "the father of the English navy, whom it was now the fashion to revile." But Lord Mulgrave<sup>1</sup> rising immediately in reply, observed, "I love and revere the memory of that gallant seaman so much, that I cannot sit here and allow him to be degraded by unmerited praise. He was indeed so great and so able a seaman that he was not formed for the details and civil duties of office, nor did I ever consider him as a great naval Minister." Lord Sandwich was unquestionably industrious, zealous, indefatigable, enlightened, and in every point of view adequate to the duties of his station, but he could not surmount the augmenting weight of war and calamity which, between 1775 and 1782, pressed upon this country. Yet scarcely had he been driven from the Admiralty for pretended neglect or want of exertion when the fleet which he had just sent out to the West Indies obtained the most glorious and decisive victory over the enemy.

With consummate ability Lord Sandwich had constructed a species of political citadel within the Ministerial lines which acknowledged hardly any other commander or comptroller than himself. The India House constituted this fortress, of which he was supposed to possess the secret keys. Many of the leading directors, among whom were the two chairmen, looked for orders, as it was commonly believed, not so much to Lord North as to the First Lord of the Admiralty. The influence necessarily conferred by such a source of power, at a time when the East India Board of Control had no existence, cannot easily be estimated. He was not wanting

<sup>1</sup> Constantine John Phipps, created Baron Mulgrave in 1794, and Earl of Mulgrave in 1812.—ED.

in endeavours to sustain his interest in Leadenhall Street by every possible means, and well aware of its importance, he contrived to distribute among his chief adherents in that quarter some of the minor honours of the Crown. On all great occasions, when the concealed springs of that complicated machine denominated the East India Company were necessary to be touched, application was made to Lord Sandwich. Even the intimations sent from the Treasury often remained inefficient till confirmed by him, and when the First Minister, towards the close of the year 1780, was prevailed on to recommend Lord Macartney<sup>1</sup> as successor to Rumbold in the government of Madras, he found that no serious attention was paid to his wishes before the Admiralty lent its co-operation. So vast a field of exclusive patronage and favour rendered its possessor not only independent of his colleagues in the Cabinet, but formidable to them, and he might justly be accounted one of the most powerful, as he was certainly one of the most able, members of the Administration.

Fox, in order to render Lord Sandwich odious, did not hesitate to enumerate his commanding interest in Leadenhall Street as one among his political crimes. On the 23d of January 1782, when Fox moved for a number of papers, preparatory to the proposed inquiry into the administration of the Admiralty under that nobleman, he observed that "of all the members of the Cabinet, there was not one more formidable from influence, if so formidable, as the Earl of Sandwich. As First Lord of the Admiralty, he could influence a whole profes-

<sup>1</sup> Sir George (afterwards Earl) Macartney, born in 1737, was appointed successively Envoy Extraordinary to Russia, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Governor of the Carribee Islands, President of Madras, Ambassador to China, and Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. He died March 31, 1800.—ED.

sion; as a Minister, he must of course be sustained by the influence of his colleagues in office. But," added he, "independent of these two sources of influence, Lord Sandwich possesses a third, which, though not equal to the power of the Crown, forms a material addition to it, and, when conjoined with it, is sufficient to crush any individual who shall venture to bring forward charges against him. The influence to which I allude he derives from the East India Company." Lord Mulgrave, who, with very considerable ability and great zeal, defended Lord Sandwich, after animadverting severely on the calumnies and invectives in which Fox had indulged himself against the First Lord of the Admiralty, demanded "what connection there was between the supposed influence possessed by the Earl of Sandwich in the India House and his official conduct at the head of the naval department?" Fox proceeded so far on the occasion to which I allude as to denominate Lord Sandwich "this faithful servant of the King of France." Pulteney treated Sir Robert Walpole in a similar manner. Adverting to the capture made by the Spaniards in 1780, when Captain Moutray's convoy fell into their hands, Fox observed that "the circumstances attending it augmented the suspicion occasioned by many other acts of the First Lord of the Admiralty, that *he was desirous to perform good and faithful service to his masters of the House of Bourbon.*" Not that Fox lent the slightest faith to these calumnious imputations, of which he well knew the falsehood and absurdity, but they were necessary towards attaining the great object of overturning Lord North's Administration. We cannot, however, reflect without surprise that a House of Commons should allow such epithets to be used and such charges to be made by one of its own

body against a great nobleman, an Earl of ancient family renowned for loyalty, holding one of the highest employments, and himself a member of the Cabinet. The fact itself eloquently proves how low the Ministry was fallen in public respect and estimation during the last weeks that Lord North continued at the head of affairs.

With Lord Amherst,<sup>1</sup> who had already passed his sixty-third year, I was well acquainted. In his person he was tall and thin, of an adust habit, with an aquiline nose and an intelligent countenance. His manners were grave, formal, and cold. As Commander-in-Chief, or, to speak more accurately, as Commanding-in-chief of the Forces, he enjoyed a place in the Cabinet. To Lionel, Duke of Dorset, he owed his first entrance into the army. From the situation of a private gentleman, descended of a good Kentish family in Holmesdale, but of very slender fortune, his military talents and his success in America had deservedly elevated him to the British peerage. Selected by the discerning eye of the Earl of Chatham, he had been sent out as the companion of Wolfe, whose brilliant conquest of Quebec was confirmed by Amherst's subsequent reduction of Montreal and Upper Canada. Under the shade of these laurels so honourably earned, which had been remunerated with the Order of the Bath, he seemed to challenge the national esteem, not to say their gratitude. Individually he possessed both; but in his official character at the head of the army he did not escape censure on various points materially affecting the discipline and the honour of the service. Not that I would be understood, when speaking of Lord Amherst, to

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey, first Lord Amherst. He commanded in America from 1758 to 1764, and was Commander-in-Chief from 1778 to 1795. He died in 1797.—D.



make the same assertion which "Junius" does relative to the Marquis of Granby in his first memorable letter, dated 21st January 1769, where he charges that nobleman with "degrading the office of Commander-in-Chief into a broker of commissions." Lord Amherst was not liable to any such imputation; but, as a member of the Administration, no ability, however recognised or transcendent, and no past services, however eminent they might be, could secure him the public favour in the midst of a war marked by ill success and now become almost hopeless in its prospective objects. The constitutional tranquillity of his temper secured him, however, from being ruffled at any indications of popular dissatisfaction. I have scarcely ever known a man who possessed more stoical apathy or command over himself. Naturally taciturn and reserved, he rarely disclosed his sentiments on any subject of a political nature. Even at the Cabinet dinners, which were held weekly, I have heard Lord Sackville<sup>1</sup> say that, though he usually gave his decided affirmative or negative to the specific measure proposed, yet he always did it in few words, often by a monosyllable, but never could, without great difficulty, be induced to assign the reasons or to state the grounds of his opinion. He was disinterested, of an elevated mind, that aspired beyond the accumulation of money. His judgment was sound and his understanding solid, but neither cultivated by education nor expanded by elegant knowledge. From the high sense entertained of his early services beyond the Atlantic he would have attracted universal respect if the unpopularity attached to the official and ministerial posts which he occupied had not counterbalanced the operation of those resplendent exertions on the public mind.

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Lord George Germaine.—ED.

Lord Thurlow, who at this time had held the great seal between two and three years, though in point of age he was the youngest member of the Cabinet, enjoyed in many respects greater public consideration than almost any other individual composing it. He had been indebted in his youth to the indefatigable exertions and importunities of the celebrated Duchess of Queensberry,<sup>1</sup> the friend of Gay, Pope, and Swift, for first procuring him from Lord Bute a silk gown, to which legal distinction he long ineffectually aspired. His talents had subsequently excited admiration in both Houses of Parliament, not less than they attracted notice at the bar. While he sat in the House of Commons as Attorney-General during more than seven years, from 1771 down to 1778, Lord North derived the greatest assistance from his eloquence and ability. His removal to the House of Peers would even have left an awful blank on the Treasury bench in the midst of the American war, if his place had not, during the two succeeding years, been ably filled, perhaps fully supplied, by Wedderburn. As Speaker of the Upper House, Lord Thurlow fulfilled all the expectations previously entertained of him by his greatest admirers.<sup>2</sup> His very person, figure, voice, and manner were formed to lend dignity, blended with awe, to the woolsack. Of a dark complexion, and harsh but handsome and regular features, with a severe and commanding demeanour, which might

<sup>1</sup> Catherine, daughter of Henry, Earl of Clarendon and Rochester, and wife of Charles, third Duke of Queensberry.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Butler describes Lord Thurlow's celebrated reply to the Duke of Grafton, who reproached the Chancellor with plebeian extraction and recent admission into the peerage. He says, "The effect of this speech, both within the walls of Parliament and out of them, was prodigious. It gave Lord Thurlow an ascendancy in the House which no Chancellor had ever possessed; it invested him in public opinion with a character of independence and honour; and this, although he was ever on the unpopular side of politics, made him always popular with the people."—*Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 799.—ED.

be sometimes denominated stern, he impressed his auditors with respect before he opened his lips. Even his eyebrows, like those of Jove, "*cuncta supercilio moventis*," conduced to complete the effect of his countenance on the beholder. Energy, acuteness, and prodigious powers of argument characterised him in debate. His comprehensive mind enabled him, when he chose to exert its powers, to embrace the question under discussion, whatever it might be, in all its bearings and relations. Nor, if we omit Lord Camden, who was already far advanced in life, did the Opposition possess any jurisprudential talents in the House of Peers that could be justly put in competition with those of Lord Thurlow.

Fox himself, during the whole course of Lord North's Administration, always excepted him from the invectives with which he loaded the other members of the Cabinet. I remember, on the 8th of May 1781, when addressing the House of Commons, Fox observed, that "incapable as were his Majesty's Ministers, he must yet make one exception, namely, the Chancellor. He is able. He is honest. He possesses a noble and independent mind. He stands alone as part of such an Administration. His situation and treatment among his colleagues correspond with the features of his character. They detest him for his virtues. They envy him for his abilities. They thwart and torment him by every invention in their power. They seize every occasion to render his position uneasy. But from his great intellectual resources his unbroken spirit soars above them, manifesting at once his consciousness of the injuries meditated, and his contempt of their efforts." Again, on the 8th of March in the subsequent year 1782, only a few days before Lord North resigned, Fox, while expressing his detestation of the Ministers collectively,

added, "Yet even among them there exists one for whom I entertain a great respect. I mean the Lord Chancellor. He always takes care indeed to convince the world that he has no share in their measures." If Lord Thurlow had really merited these eulogiums—if, while despising and disapproving the measures of the Cabinet in which he sat and voted, he nevertheless supported them in his place on the woolsack in the House of Peers and on all occasions—how relaxed must have been his political principles! But Fox dispensed his praises or his censures, as I always thought, with too much regard to present circumstances, retracting the one or the other just as the exigency of the moment dictated, and covering all contradictions under the splendour of his eloquence. Only one year later, in March 1783, at which time he had formed his union with Lord North, he launched out into the severest accusations of Lord Thurlow, because Fox knew that the Chancellor then formed the principal impediment to the coalition getting possession of the Government.

Lord Thurlow's admirable intellectual parts were, nevertheless, by no means unaccompanied with corresponding defects. As Lord Chancellor, he was accused of procrastination in suffering the causes brought before him in his court to accumulate without end. Perhaps this charge, so frequently made against those who have held the great seal, was not, however, more true as applied to him than of others who succeeded to his office. But even in Parliament, his temper, morose, sullen, and intractable, sometimes mastering his reason, prevented him from always exerting the faculties with which nature had endowed him, or at least clouded and obscured their effect. In the Cabinet those shades of character which rendered him often impracticable

were not to be surmounted by any efforts or remonstrances. It can hardly be believed that at the weekly Ministerial dinners, where, after the cloth was removed, measures of state were often discussed or agitated, Lord Thurlow would frequently refuse to take any part. He has even more than once left his colleagues to deliberate, while he sullenly stretched himself along the chairs, and fell, or appeared to fall, fast asleep. If I had not received this fact from an eye-witness and a member of that Cabinet, I should not indeed venture to report a thing so improbable. The circumstance was, however, it may be presumed, well known to Fox and his friends.

Notwithstanding the ruggedness and asperity which he displayed, as well as the bold freedom of speech exercised by him, qualities that procured him the nickname of the *Tiger*, no man could at times appear more pleasing, affable, and communicative in conversation. I have once or twice seen him on such occasions, which were more highly valued because they were rare or unexpected. During the period of his youth he had led a dissolute life, and, like "Ranger" in the "Suspicious Husband," had given proofs of his devotion to pleasure scarcely compatible, as it might have been thought, with the severe studies and profession of the law. The barmaid at Nando's coffee-house in Fleet Street, whose charms were felt throughout every court of the Temple and of Lincoln's Inn, long constituted an object of his homage. He subsequently transferred his affections to a lady of extraordinary beauty and of an honourable family, by whom he had several daughters. To this connection the Duchess of Kingston imprudently ventured to advert by observing that she could relate "a Canterbury tale," while on her trial for bigamy

at the bar of the House of Lords, when Thurlow filled the post of Attorney-General. Irritated at an allusion so painful, he threatened to burn her in the hand, notwithstanding her privilege of peerage. Like Henley, Earl of Northington, his predecessor in the office of Chancellor (the Lord Ringbone of Anstey's "New Bath Guide"<sup>1</sup>), Thurlow never failed to mingle oaths and execrations with his common discourse.<sup>2</sup> In the afternoon of life, conviviality, wine, and festive society unbent his mind. It was in company with Rigby, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Dundas, and a few other select friends, that he threw off altogether his constitutional severity. At the Pay-Office in Whitehall, where Rigby then resided, Lord Thurlow forgot the double toils annexed to his situation as head of the law and as Minister of State. Perhaps on these occasions, when the claret circulated freely, he sometimes indulged himself in animadversions on men and measures which were afterwards reported to Fox, and might in some measure justify or explain the expressions used by the latter when speaking of Lord Thurlow in the House of Commons. Possessed of faculties so transcendent, however mingled with human weakness and infirmity, he must always be considered as one of the most distinguished individuals who has sat in the councils of George III. at any period of his reign.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Lord Ringbone, who lay in the parlour below  
On account of the gout he had got in his toe,  
Began on a sudden to curse and to swear.  
I protest, my dear mother, 'twas shocking to hear  
The oaths of that reprobate, gouty, old peer."—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Thurlow, enraged one day at dinner with his butler, cried, "Go to hell! Go to the devil—to the devil, I say!" "Give me a character, my Lord," replied the arch fellow; "gentlemen like to have a character from an acquaintance."—P.

<sup>3</sup> Pitt said of him, "He opposes everything, proposes nothing, and agrees to anything."

We descend now to the less efficient members of the Cabinet. Lord Bathurst, who had been at this time President of the Council ever since the resignation of Lord Gower in the autumn of 1779, was son to the celebrated Allen Bathurst,<sup>1</sup> created a peer by Queen Anne in 1711, and who might at the time of his decease be considered as the last of the great knot of wits and men of genius that rendered in some measure illustrious the short as well as inglorious Ministry of Oxford and Bolingbroke. It is to him that Pope addresses the "Third Epistle" of his "Moral Essays;" to him in conjunction with Lord Burlington, the famous architect, that he alludes when he says—

"Who then shall grace or who improve the soil?  
Who plants like Bathurst or who builds like Boyle."

He lived to an almost patriarchal age, in possession of nearly all the faculties of his body and mind, passing the greater part of the evening of his life amidst those superb woods and under those shades which he had reared, immortalised by Pope, at Oakley Grove in Gloucestershire, enjoying the rare felicity to see his son hold the great seal of England. I believe he died in 1775, having by a singular destiny, which perhaps has no parallel in our history, outlived more than sixty years the princess who raised him to the peerage.

His son may probably be considered as the least able lawyer to whom the great seal of this country was confided in the course of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Lord King, who became Chancellor under

<sup>1</sup> Henry, Lord Chancellor Apsley, afterwards second Earl of Bathurst, was son of Allen Apsley, first Earl of Bathurst. He built Apsley House, Piccadilly.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "I remember wanting to make the last Chancellor Bathurst dance at one of M. De Guisnes' balls. He came thither very drunk, and as somebody wished to see the Scotch *reel*, I proposed that my Lord Chancellor should dance it."—*Walpole to Lady Ossory*.—D.

George I., though he survived his faculties and is said to have drivelled on the bench, originally displayed eminent intellectual powers, which deservedly raised him from an obscure origin, his father having been a bookseller at Exeter, to that high legal dignity.<sup>1</sup> Yet Lord Bathurst held his office during seven or eight years, and I have been assured that his decrees while he presided in the Court of Chancery were in general regarded by the bar as wise, just, and unexceptionable. A fact equally singular as it is true, but which I know from the best authority, is, that from November 1775 down to June 1778, comprehending a period of more than two years and a half, when Lord Weymouth<sup>2</sup> and Lord Bathurst sat together in the same Cabinet, the former nobleman, and not the Chancellor, decided all the law questions brought before them in their *Ministerial* capacity. These decisions, dictated by admirable sense, united brevity and perspicuity to the most comprehensive intelligence. Lord Bathurst was, of all members of the Administration, the most advanced in age, nor could he, like his father, boast of exemption from the infirmities usually attendant on that period of life.<sup>3</sup> A degree of caducity was visible in his frame, and even his mind did not appear to be wholly exempt from decay. In Parliament his talents were rarely exerted, but his unsullied character and moral qualities entitled him to universal respect.

<sup>1</sup> He told my grandmother that they put him apprentice to a grocer, "But," says he, "my Lady, I could never abide the shop after I had done eating the plums."—P.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Thynne, Viscount Weymouth, who in 1789 was advanced to the dignity of Marquis of Bath. He was born in 1734 and died in 1796.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> There is an anecdote of Lord Bathurst to the effect that on one occasion, when his son, Lord Apsley, retired after supper, he said, "Now that the old gentleman has gone to bed, let us be merry and enjoy ourselves."—ED.



The Earl of Dartmouth,<sup>1</sup> as Lord Privy Seal, in right of his office filled a seat in the Cabinet. His near affinity to Lord North, and that circumstance alone, placed him ostensibly in Administration, Lord Dartmouth's mother, Viscountess Lewisham, having married, after her first husband's decease, the Earl of Guildford. In his public character, whether in or out of Parliament, he attracted no share of general attention, and lays claim to no place in the history of his own time.<sup>2</sup>

The Secretary at War, on the contrary, though not possessing a seat in the Cabinet, constituted an object of universal consideration, and attracted all eyes towards him. Mr. Charles Jenkinson,<sup>3</sup> since created Earl of Liverpool, occupied in 1781 that employment. Few persons in the course of this long and eventful reign have played so important a part behind the curtain of state; still fewer individuals have attained to such eminence, personal as well as political, unaided by the advantages of high birth or of natural connections. Descended from a very respectable family that had been raised to the baronetage by Charles II. soon after his restoration, his paternal fortune was nevertheless of the most limited description when he commenced his career. But his talents, which were admirably adapted to secure his future elevation, soon dispersed the clouds that attended the morning of his life. They recommended him to Lord Bute, then at the head of the Treasury, who made Mr. Jenkinson his private secretary, and through the interposition of

<sup>1</sup> William, the second Earl, born in 1731; he died in 1801. Four months previous to his decease, his eldest son, George, was called to the Upper House as Baron Dartmouth.—D.

<sup>2</sup> He was a cheerful, pious, and amiable man.—D.

<sup>3</sup> He was the father of the Prime Minister, Liverpool. He was born in 1727, filled very many offices, and was created Baron Hawkesbury in 1786, and Earl of Liverpool two years subsequently. He died in 1808.—D.

that nobleman he became not only personally known to the sovereign, but highly acceptable at St. James's. When Lord Bute withdrew in 1763 from the post of First Minister, Mr. Jenkinson still continued to occupy the same confidential employment under his successor, George Grenville; nor was he displaced till Lord Rockingham came into power in July 1765, when Burke succeeded him in that situation. Those who supposed or asserted that a secret communication was still maintained between Lord Bute and the King accused Jenkinson of forming the confidential medium through which that intercourse was principally maintained. This exposed him to popular clamour, as being equally unconstitutional in itself and dangerous to the liberties of the British people. But in proportion to the obloquy that such an imputation excited was the respect that it attracted.

As Lord Bute gradually retired into private life and became insensibly forgotten, Mr. Jenkinson proportionably came forward. Throughout Lord North's Administration, from 1770 down to 1782, his intercourse with the King, and even his influence over the royal mind, were assumed to be constant, and sometimes paramount to, or subversive of, the measures proposed by the First Minister. However difficult of proof such assertions were, and however contrary they might be to truth or fact, they did not operate the less forcibly on the bulk of the nation, and were not less eagerly credited by men of all parties. No denials on the part of persons in power could erase the impression which newspapers and pamphlets industriously circulated through the kingdom. In the House of Commons the speakers in Opposition continually affected to consider Lord North, together with the whole Cabinet, as played on by unseen agents, who alone

possessed the secret of state and the real confidence of the Crown. "The noble Lord," said Fox, when addressing Parliament on the 26th of March 1781, where I was present and heard him, "would never have been invited to accept his present office except under the condition of promising to execute the measures *chalked out* to him respecting America. He would not have been suffered to remain in office if he had declined to carry on the war with the Colonies. His acquiescence in and submission to those weak as well as wicked measures, in madly beginning and more madly persevering in that accursed war, *is the price of his place.*" Lord North, though he rose when Fox sat down, and though he answered many other passages of Fox's speech with great ability, descending to the most minute details, yet neither denied this charge nor expressed any indignation at such an assertion. His silence emboldened his opponents, who did not scruple even to designate Jenkinson as the depositary of this mysterious and undefined influence. Of course, whenever he rose to speak, all attention was absorbed by him, as being the supposed oracle who knew and might promulgate those hidden truths of state, in which Ministers themselves, it was pretended, were not always allowed to participate, and of which he constituted the only certain channel.<sup>1</sup>

At this time he was about fifty-four years of age. He was above the common height, but his lank limbs and figure were destitute of elegance or of grace. The expression of his countenance was not

<sup>1</sup> It is in allusion to the royal favour enjoyed by Jenkinson that Mason in his "Heroic Epistle to Sir W. Chambers" says—

"Let all the frippery things  
Be-placed, be-pensioned, and be-starred by kings,  
Let these prefer a levée's harmless talk,  
Be asked how often and how far they walk,  
Proud of a single word, nor hope for more,  
Though Jenkinson is blessed with many a score."—D.

destitute of deep intelligence.<sup>1</sup> Reflection and caution seemed to be stamped on every feature, while his eyes were usually, even in conversation, directed towards the earth. Something impervious and inscrutable seemed to accompany and to characterise his demeanour, which awakened curiosity while it repressed or discouraged inquiry. His enemies asserted that he resembled a dark lantern; and as much as the human figure or physiognomy can ever be supposed to offer such a strange similarity, unquestionably it existed in him. Even the twinkling motion of his eyelids, which he half closed from time to time in speaking, made the allusion, however fanciful, more close and striking.<sup>2</sup> Nor should it be omitted, when attempting to transmit to posterity an imperfect outline of the person and address of this celebrated nobleman, that his head, continually revolving on its axis while he addressed his discourse either to the House of Commons or to any individual, moved in a perpetual circle. His manners were polite, calm, and unassuming; grave, if not cold, but not distant, without any mixture of pride or affectation. In society, though reserved, he was not silent, and though guarded on certain topics, communicative on ordinary subjects. He always appeared as if desirous to disclaim and to reject the consideration which he involuntarily attracted.<sup>3</sup> It was not difficult, on a short acquaintance, to discover that he had read men more than

<sup>1</sup> It *was* very peculiar, but he was a delightful companion in social life. I know few people whose conversation was more pleasingly diversified with fact and sentiment, narration and reflection, than that of the first Lord Liverpool.—P. Another note by Mrs. Piozzi is as follows:—"He was to me a very particularly agreeable man; as a converser, unaffectedly good-humoured, and pleasant in his voice and manner, though eminently ugly, long, and lean, with strange sort of eyes, oddly thrown up or cast down, but never looking like the eyes of any other man."

<sup>2</sup> True, true.—P.

<sup>3</sup> So he did.—P.

books, though he had received an academic education, had been originally destined for the clerical profession, and had even been admitted to deacon's orders. Yet he neither manifested the elegant information only to be acquired by visiting foreign countries, nor the classic ideas and images derived from a familiarity with the productions of antiquity.<sup>1</sup> Even his knowledge of modern history was rather financial and commercial than general or critical.<sup>2</sup> But, in recompense for these deficiencies of an ornamental kind, he possessed more useful and solid attainments calculated to raise their possessor in life.

No man in official situation was supposed to understand better the principles of trade, navigation, manufactures, and revenue. He had written and published on those subjects in a manner that sufficiently proved his profound acquaintance with them. Supple, patient, mild, laborious, persevering, attentive to improve the favourable occasions which presented themselves, and always cool, he never lost the ground he had once gained. As a speaker in the House of Commons, he rose seldom, unless called out by particular circumstances, nor, when on his legs, did he ever weary the patience of his auditors. No ray of wit, humour, or levity pervaded his speeches. He neither introduced into them metaphors, digressions, nor citations; all was fact and business. His language had nothing in it

<sup>1</sup> "Lord Liverpool had received not only a *good*, but a *long* education, having spent at the University more than double the usual period of academic residence. He was an excellent classical scholar, and possessed as great a variety of reading as perhaps any of his contemporaries (except only Burke). He continued all his life what is commonly called a *bookish* man; and though his natural good sense and acuteness of observation undoubtedly enabled him to *read men* with the eye of a practised statesman, yet he was certainly as little versed in the ways of the world and general society as any man of his station whom we could quote."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 205.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> I never found him deficient.—P.

animated or elevated. Scarcely was it, indeed, always correct or exempt from some little inelegancies and redundancies of diction. But it never was defective in the essentials of perspicuity, brevity, and thorough information. He used to remind me of a man crossing a torrent on stones, and so carefully did he place his foot at every step as never once to wet his shoe. I have seen him before a crowded House acquit himself with wonderful dexterity, while Secretary at War, when officially addressing Parliament. Such qualifications, even independent of the supposed favour of the sovereign, necessarily rendered him an object of respect and of attention to every party.

Rigby,<sup>1</sup> sole Paymaster of the Forces, occupied scarcely an inferior place to Jenkinson in the public estimation, and seemed to fill a much higher in his opinion of himself. As if he had meant to show that he acted independently of Ministers and was above their control, he never sat on the Government side of the House of Commons; but he did not on that account give the less unqualified support on all occasions to Administration. Sheridan, with equal severity and wit, animadverted on this conduct during the debate of the 8th of March 1782, when Rigby, though he admitted that Lord North would act properly by resigning, yet added that he should vote for that nobleman's continuance in power. "He has long declared," observed Sheridan, "that the American war ought to be abandoned, but he has invariably voted for its prosecution. I nevertheless believe that he is very sincere. I doubt not that, as a member of this House and as a private individual, he has always

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. Richard Rigby, born in 1722, commenced political life as secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Duke of Bedford). He died April 28, 1788.—ED.

detested the war with America as much as any man; but, unfortunately, he has never been able to succeed in persuading the Paymaster that it is a bad war. And in whatever character he may speak, it is always *the Paymaster* who *votes* within these walls. The attacks which he sometimes makes on his noble friend are in fact, therefore, only an ingenious mode of giving him support. They are only metaphorical; but '*Aye*' and '*No*' are speeches that do not admit of a *trope*." The obtrusive manner in which, at the levée, he often thrust himself between persons of the greatest rank, in order more expeditiously to approach the sovereign, sufficiently indicated the value in which he held his personal appearance at St. James's. When in his place in the House of Commons, he was invariably habited in a full-dress suit of clothes, commonly of a purple or dark colour, without lace or embroidery, close buttoned, with his sword thrust through the pocket. Corpulent in his person, he was not on that account unwieldy or inactive. His countenance was very expressive, but not of genius; still less did it indicate timidity or modesty. All the comforts of the Pay-Office seemed to be eloquently depicted in it, and the "*lumen purpureum*" which beamed from his suffused features served as a comment on the text of "*Junius*," when he panegyrises the Duke of Bedford's solitary protection of "blushing merit" in Mr. Rigby's person. His manner, rough yet frank, bold and overbearing, if not insolent, but manly, admirably set off whatever sentiments he uttered in Parliament.

Like Jenkinson, he borrowed neither from ancient nor from modern authors. His eloquence was altogether his own, simple, strong, and natural, addressed to the plain comprehension of his hearers. Whatever he meant he expressed indeed without cir-

cumlocution or declamation. There was a happy audacity about his forehead which must have been the gift of Nature. He seemed neither to fear nor even to respect the House, whose composition as a body he well knew, and to the members of which assembly he never appeared to give credit for any portion of virtue, patriotism, or public spirit. Far from concealing these sentiments, he insinuated, or even pronounced, them without disguise; and from *his* lips they neither excited surprise nor even commonly awakened reprehension. Fox usually treated Rigby with great courtesy, and on some occasions even with a degree of attention approaching to predilection or regard—sentiments which always met with a suitable return. Rigby had succeeded Fox's father, Lord Holland, in the Pay-Office, after a short interval of three years. But Sheridan observed no management or delicacy towards the Paymaster. On the same day that he had commented with such ingenious severity relative to the inconsistent but invariable support extended by Rigby to Administration, Sheridan animadverted in strong terms on the disrespectful, or rather the contemptuous manner in which on all occasions he mentioned the constituent body of the people. "He treats the petitions," said Sheridan, "recently presented from various parts of the kingdom, praying for a termination of the American war, in a way highly indecent, and at the same time equally impolitic. The people begin to be sufficiently irritated, and gentlemen will act wisely not to make use of contumelious expressions towards them in this assembly." Rigby, though not easily arrested or intimidated, yet submitted in silence to Sheridan's reprehensions of his conduct.

If Jenkinson might be esteemed the secret oracle to whom all those men denominated *the King's*



*Friends* constantly looked for direction in difficult cases,<sup>1</sup> Rigby was the standard round which they rallied. Their numbers were considerable, and they were supposed by no means to take their directions implicitly on all occasions from the Treasury. "Junius" treats them with his accustomed severity. "Ministers," says he, when speaking of Parliament, "are no longer the public servants of the state, but the private domestics of the sovereign. One particular class of men are permitted to call themselves the King's Friends, as if the body of the people were the King's enemies, or as if his Majesty looked for a resource or consolation in the attachment of a few favourites against the general contempt and detestation of his subjects. Edward and Richard II. made the same distinction between the collective body of the people and a contemptible party who surrounded the throne." Even in the House of Commons the King's Friends were alluded to by name. I remember on the 15th of March 1782, which formed the last debate that took place within those walls previous to Lord North's resignation, a member of Opposition, Harrison, one of the two representatives for Grimsby,<sup>2</sup> mentioned them without circumlocution. Lord North, as well as Sir Grey Cooper and Robinson, the two Secretaries of the Treasury, having declared that they had not named or recommended any individual for a share in the loan recently negotiated, Harrison observed that he gave them credit for the truth of their assertion. "But," continued he, "I entertain

<sup>1</sup> Wilkes said "that the distinction which has been supposed to exist between the friends of the King and the friends of the Minister originated in the councils of Lord Bath, when he went over to the Ministry on his dereliction of the popular party. The influence of the Crown he described to be irresistible."—*C. Butler's Reminiscences*, i. 76.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> John Harrison.—ED.

too good an opinion of the gratitude of the gentlemen who have contracted for the whole of the loan, not to suppose that they will anticipate the noble Lord's wishes by giving to such members of this House as may desire it a sufficient share of it to retain them steadily in that list, which, as a mark of pre-eminence, is denominated by the honourable appellation of the King's Friends, an appellation no doubt given in order to distinguish them from the factious individuals who have uniformly resisted the salutary measures of his Majesty's Ministers, which have brought the country into its present envied situation!" No notice was taken of Harrison's allusion by any member of Administration. As this body of men grew up and increased with the progress of the American war, so with its termination they seemed to become extinct. After Pitt's victory over "the Coalition," and the convocation of a new Parliament in 1784, the King's Friends were found in every part of the House of Commons. But it was not so in 1781 under Lord North, when Jenkinson and Rigby were supposed, however erroneously, to be often more in the real secrets of the Crown than the First Minister himself. A very select party usually adjourned to the Pay-Office after late evenings in the House of Commons, where the excellent cheer and the claret obliterated all painful recollections connected with public affairs.

The post of Treasurer of the Navy was held by Mr. Welbore Ellis,<sup>1</sup> whom we have since seen, after ostensibly filling the office of Colonial Secretary of State, during a few weeks, on the resignation of Lord George Germain, and after occupying during several years a distinguished place in the ranks of Opposition under Lord North and Fox, raised in the winter of life by Pitt, like so many other indi-

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 362.

viduals, to the dignity of a British peer. He might be considered as the Nestor of the Ministry and of the House of Commons. In his figure, manner, and deportment the very essence of form, he regularly took his place on the Treasury bench dressed in all points as if he had been going to the drawing-room at St. James's. His eloquence was precise, grave, and constrained, unilluminated by taste, and calculated to convince more than to exhilarate or electrify his audience. The respect due to his age, character, and employment, rather than the force of his arguments, commonly secured him a patient hearing, but he was neither listened to with enthusiasm, nor regretted when he ceased actively to exert his abilities in support of the measures of Administration.

The Attorney-General, Wallace,<sup>1</sup> as well as Mansfield,<sup>2</sup> Solicitor-General, were men of acknowledged talents, parliamentary no less than professional. The latter manifested great energies of mind and character. But it might be esteemed in some degree their misfortune that, having recently succeeded two persons so eminent as Thurlow and Wedderburn,<sup>3</sup> the House could not avoid judging of them more by comparison than by their own intrinsic merit. Both the Attorney and Solicitor General were, moreover, obscured in the superior intellectual powers that characterised Mr. Dundas, then Lord Advocate of Scotland, and since created Viscount Melville. His figure tall, manly, and

<sup>1</sup> James Wallace, Attorney-General in 1780 and 1783.—ED. A coarse man with a provincial dialect. His wife was charming.—P.

<sup>2</sup> James Mansfield, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, M.P. for the University, Solicitor-General 1780-82, and again in 1783. He succeeded Lord Alvanley as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in April 1804, and was then knighted. He resigned in 1814, and died November 23, 1821.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Wedderburn was charming, but then he was all over affectation. He had beautiful eyes. I liked Jenkinson better.—P.

advantageous, his countenance open, cheerful, and pleasingly expressive, though tinged with convivial purple, prejudiced in his favour. Neither the Scotticisms with which his speeches abounded, nor an accent peculiarly Northern as well as uncouth, could prevent his assuming and maintaining that conspicuous place in the Ministerial ranks to which his pre-eminent parts entitled him. These very defects of elocution or of diction, by the ludicrous effect that they produced, became often converted into advantages, as they unavoidably operated to force a smile from his bitterest opponents, and chequered with momentary good-humour or laughter the personalities of debate. The apparent frankness of his manner, which formed a striking contrast with Jenkinson's guarded reserve, conciliated or disarmed in some measure those whose political opinions were most adverse to Government. Never did any man conceal deeper views of every kind under the appearance of careless inattention to self-interest. In him the seeming want of caution or artifice in his ordinary intercourse capacitated him for contending successfully with men of more habitual self-command. His voice, strong, clear, and sonorous, enabled him to surmount the noise of a popular assembly, and almost to enforce attention at moments of the greatest clamour or impatience. Far from shunning the post of danger, he always seemed to court it; and was never deterred from stepping forward to the assistance of Ministers by the violence of Opposition, by the unpopularity of the measure to be defended, or by the difficulty of the attempt.

His speeches, able, animated, and argumentative, were delivered without hesitation, and unembarrassed by any timidity. If they displayed no ornaments of style and no beauties of composition, it was

impossible to accuse them of any deficiency in sterling sense or in solid ability. He was the most powerful auxiliary whom Lord North could boast of in the Lower House. Though elevated in the trammels of Scotch jurisprudence, and long accustomed to plead at the bar of that country, his mind, which disdained so confined a sphere of action, propelled him to try his force on a greater theatre. Animated by this resolution, he quitted the study of law for the career of politics, and, in defiance of every impediment, abandoning the Court of Session, ventured to seek fortune in an English House of Commons. Conscious of his own intellectual superiority, and guided by a profound but well-regulated ambition, he already aspired to offices and situations seemingly beyond the pale of his legal profession. India, he wisely thought, opened to him a field worthy of his talents, and the state of danger, as well as of disorder, into which those extensive dominions had been thrown by the mismanagement or incapacity of the East India Company's servants, particularly on the Coast of Coromandel, necessarily brought their affairs under Parliamentary discussion. The occasion appeared favourable, and he availed himself of it with prompt decision. Placed as he was soon afterwards at the head of a secret committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the war existing in the Carnatic, he there laid the foundation of the power which we have since seen him exercise as a Minister of that department under Pitt's Administration during many successive years. Expensive from natural character, by no means averse to pleasure or insensible to female charms, always blending conviviality in some measure with business, and regardless of money except as constituting the source of enjoyment, he never failed to form one of the festive

party which met at the Pay-Office. Closely connected in politics no less than by habits of life and private friendship with Rigby, they might be said to act indeed in secret unison, and to lend each other a mutual assistance on every occasion.

The two Secretaries of the Treasury occupied a very different place in the scale of Ministerial, or rather of Parliamentary importance under Lord North's Administration. Sir Grey Cooper, with the single exception of the Cornish boroughs in the interest of the Crown, and the revenues of the Duchy itself, both which were intrusted to his superintendence during the minority of the Prince of Wales, was confined to the mere official duties of his post. But Robinson<sup>1</sup> might be considered as one of the most active and essential functionaries of the executive Government. I knew him intimately, both in and out of office. A native of the county of Westmoreland, and descended from an ancient family of Highland origin, though unadorned with any accomplishments of education or advantages of address, he nevertheless displayed many qualifications that fitted him admirably for his situation. His person was coarse, inelegant, and somewhat inclined to corpulency, but he possessed solid judgment and suavity of temper, combined with plain, unaffected, and conciliating manners, was capable of great application as well as of steady friendship, and by no means wanted decision of character.

On him devolved that delicate and most important department then known by the denomination of the Management of the House of Commons, a branch of Administration, or rather of secret service, unfortunately interwoven with, and inseparable from, the

<sup>1</sup> John Robinson of Wyke House, Middlesex. He quitted Lord North's party, and joined Pitt at the end of 1783.

genius of the British constitution, perhaps of every form of government in which democracy or popular representation makes an essential part. Towards the close of an unfortunate war, when the Ministry was threatened with almost monthly dissolution, and when a numerous Opposition acquired strength in proportion to the national misfortunes, this management required unceasing vigilance. Robinson was the depositary of the "*livre rouge*," where were supposed to be contained the names of those members of one, if not of both Houses of Parliament who were retained by and devoted to the Administration. But it was not only in the secret arrangements of official business that he manifested dexterity and energy. He more than once exercised with equal ability and effect, as I know, the functions of higher officers of state. It was he who, on the refusal of Lord Weymouth,<sup>1</sup> then Secretary for the Southern Department, countersigned the secret orders,<sup>2</sup> which were sent out to Madras overland, on the 14th of April 1778, by the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the East India Company, authorising the immediate attack of Pondicherry.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Marquis of Bath.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "He is so absurdly ignorant of official and constitutional forms as to assert that Robinson, the *Secretary of the Treasury*, countersigned, on the refusal of Lord Weymouth, the *Secretary of State*, an order for the attack of Pondicherry in 1778—a perfect impossibility."—*Quarterly Review*, xiii. 210.

Sir Nathaniel's answer is as follows :—"Mr. Robinson, writing to Sir John Macpherson from Wyke House, Isleworth, 23d May 1800, in a letter which has been long since printed, expressly says, 'My correspondence with the Nabob (of Arcot) shall be produced if desired, which it fell to my lot (though not within my province) to carry on, as also in concert with the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman, as a Special Committee, to write out orders to the Governor and Council of Madras for the capture of Pondicherry, which was effected so expeditiously, *when his Majesty's Secretary of State would not sign such orders.*' I leave this letter to be denied or corrected by the Reviewer."—*Answer to Calumnious Misrepresentations*, 1818, pp. 13, 14.—ED.

To the manly decision of this timely measure, which is not the less true because it may appear improbable, or because venal and ignorant reviewers have declared it "a perfect impossibility"—a measure embraced by Lord North at a moment when the war with France, though inevitable and impending, was not actually commenced—we owed the capture of that important settlement, the chief establishment of the enemy on the Coromandel Coast, which gave us an ascendant over the French during the whole future course of hostilities in India.

END OF VOL. I.





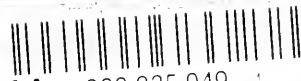




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